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SPOOGE-TASTIC!
NEW GAME OFFER!
See Page 128





CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

1996/97

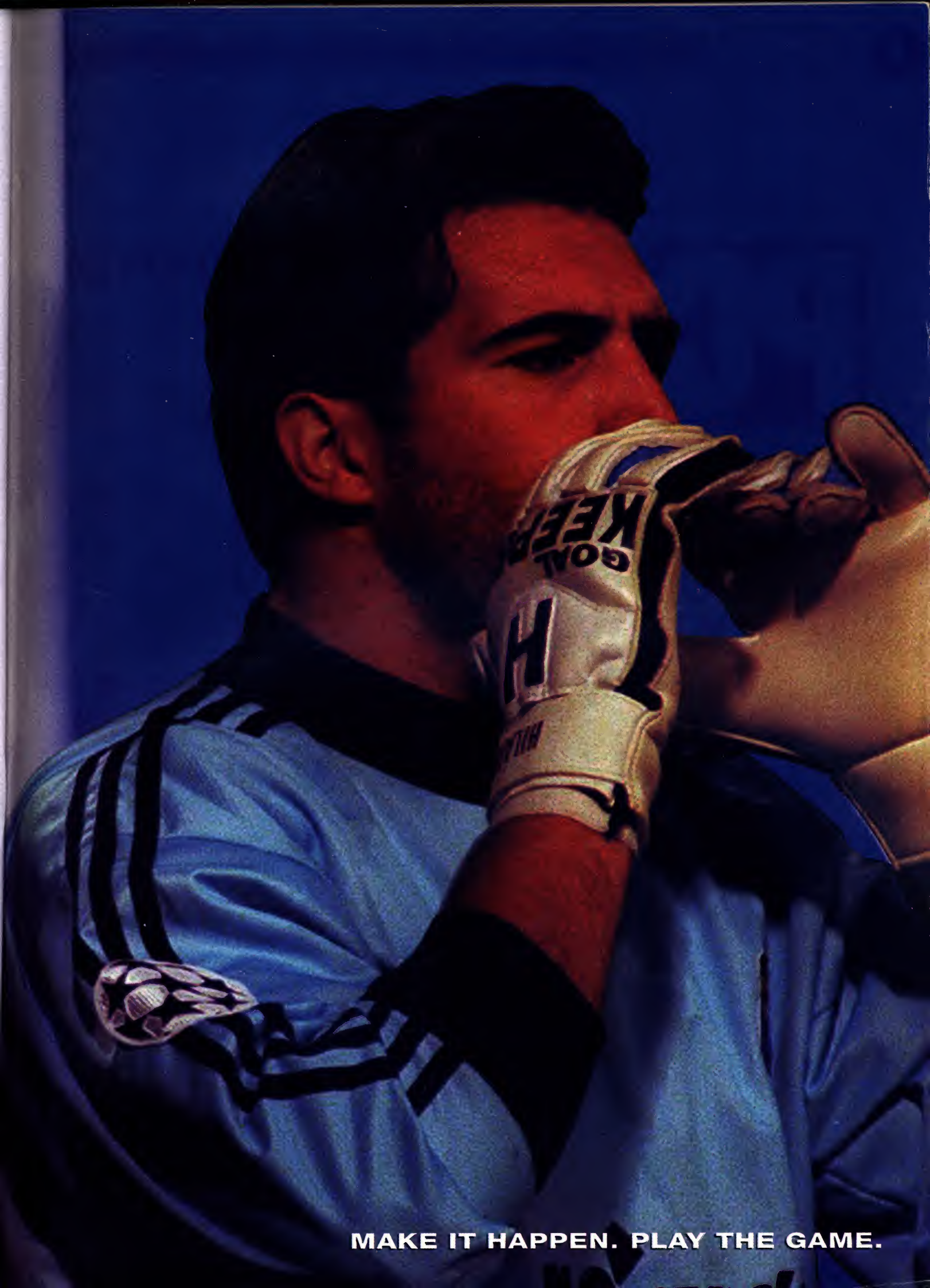
**every player
says he wants to win the
champions
league
the best let
their feet do the
talking**



**The official
computer game of the
UEFA Champions League.**



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MAKE IT HAPPEN. PLAY THE GAME.



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The May issue of PC Zone goes
on sale Thursday 10 April

PC Zone is the UK's best-selling
PC games magazine: ABC 43,149

PPA

PC Zone is published monthly by Dennis Publishing Ltd.
Company registered in England, number 1120000.
Dennis Publishing Group Publications

Dennis

THEME HOSPITAL

Following on from where *Theme Park* left off, our exclusive review of Bullfrog's *Theme Hospital* uncovers the bandaged sores and puss-laden boils of a typically twisted take on the 'sim' genre. All that's left to answer now is: are hospitals more exciting to build than theme parks?



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Film licences, don't you just love them? Take a shit movie and make an even worse game out of it. What a fab idea. Charlie Brooker has a few ideas of his own that may well turn the whole situation round. Then again maybe it won't. Turn to page 113 for the definitive guide to games that should have been movies, and movies that should have been games, and lots of other movie-game shenanigans thrown in for good measure.



COVER DISKS

CD ZONE



Help!

The CD not working? HD playing up? The PC's being a total bast? Don't worry – phone our helpline and sort yourself out pronto!

HD DISK HELP

Phone Matthew on 01274 736990

Any week day between 9am and 4pm

CD-ROM HELP

Phone ABT on 01708 250250

Any week day between 11am and 6pm
(Please DO NOT phone the PC Zone office as your calls will NOT be answered)

If you are calling either help line, then please take note of the following points:

- If possible have your PC operating and near to the phone when you call.
- If this is not possible, note down as much relevant information as possible ie system type, sound card, RAM etc, plus the nature of the fault.
- Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call to jot down the relevant info.

No CD?

If you are unable to get your grubby paws on the CD issue, then fear not! Simply fill out this slip, enclose your HD from the cover plus a cheque for a whole £1 and send it to:

CD Exchange (49), PC Zone, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover St, London W1P 7HJ

Your details (please print clearly)

Name:

Address:

Post code:

Please make cheques payable to:
DENNIS PUBLISHING Ltd.

CDs from previous issues are also available.



HD DISKS

To run this month's floppy demo you're going to need to load it from Windows. Simply insert disk one into your floppy drive, access the drive and double-click on the 'Set-up' icon. The games' installation program will now take you through everything you'll need to do.



Q-BOB (MoonRock Software – Shareware)

Ah, let us recall the glory days of *Q-Bert*, one of the weirdest games ever to poke its head over the arcade fence. *Q-Bob*, as the title suggests, is eerily similar to *Q-Bert*, except that it stars a little spaceman instead of a weird, trunk-nosed, orangey-yellow thing. The idea is to hop from cube to cube, filling each in with colour as you do so. You can only move along a diagonal plane and you've got to take care not to fall off the sides (not as easy as it sounds). Oh, and try not to get hit by any of the things that move around and stuff. Now hop it!

Specs: 8Mb, 486DX, SVGA Controls: Mouse

IF YOU LIKE THE CUT OF Q-BOB'S JIB, why not e-mail the programmer and tell him your views? You can reach him by e-mailing moonrock@moonrock.com. You can also order the full registered version from him, although you might feel a bit stupid writing a cheque out to 'Mister Moonrock'.



CD-ROM

This month's CD is absolutely bursting with fantastic demos and utilities. To run the CD from DOS, insert the CD into your CD-ROM drive, change to the appropriate drive (ie D:) and type **PCZONE.EXE**. To run the CD from Windows, insert the CD and click on **BROWSER.EXE** under the CD icon.

Carmageddon (SCI)

Now this is what we want. Welcome to *Carmageddon*, a nigh-on unbelievable cars-and-carnage splatterfest that successfully evokes the spirit of *DeathRace 2000*, the infamously tasteless driving-without-due-care-and-attention movie and then surpasses it a hundredfold. It's a relentless orgy of engine-revving, fender-bending, barrel-rolling lunacy, with huge great sloppy buckets of steaming gore lobbed in for good measure. The plot? There is no plot. Just drive like a total lunatic. Really, this is the most repellent,



psychotic filth imaginable... which is why we love it to pieces. You'll have to play it to believe it. We're not kidding – you'll feel like having a bath afterwards. Duncan's been raving about this non-stop since he first clapped eyes on it, and if this little taster is anything to go by, he's got bloody good reason to do so. More fun than *Quake*? It might just be...

INSTRUCTIONS:

There are three ways to 'win' in *Carmageddon*:

- 1) Follow the racecourse and pass through all the checkpoints.
- 2) Destroy all of your opponents' vehicles by ramming the shit out of them.
- 3) Splatter every pedestrian in sight with your car.

A QUIET WORD IN THE EAR OF THE STUPID

It's come to our attention that some of you are, to coin a phrase, 'as thick as shit in the neck of a bottle'. For instance, this month, the *Carmageddon* demo – you won't be able to find it on our Windows-based browser. Why? Because it's primarily a DOS game, that's why. You need to run the 'PCZONE.BAT' file from the CD, because that's where we keep all the DOS games, okay? Any of you bastards start whinging and we'll be round your house with a baseball bat. And some pliers. And maybe a nice bottle of red and some tight rubberwear. Kissy kissy.

Option 1 is, obviously, for girls. As far as we're concerned, the race itself can go hang. The programmers obviously agree, since they've left the game as 'open-ended' as possible. Go exploring. See how many ludicrous stunts you can pull off. Attempt a few 360 degree handbrake turns through screaming crowds of pedestrians. Drive off the side of skyscrapers. Do whatever the hell you like, basically. Rarely do we get quite this excited over a demo – check it out now and find out why.



Redneck Rampage

(Interplay)

Yes, this month we bring you not one, but two games whose sole aim seems to be to deprave and corrupt every single one of our readers. Say a big 'yee-haw' to *Redneck Rampage*, a 3D shoot 'em up best described as *Duke Nukem* meets *Deliverance*. The plot concerns some meaningless hoo-hah about alien abduction, but what gives the game its edge is the unrelenting deep-fried southern flavour. The poor white trash are just lambs to the slaughter as you let off steam with all manner of weaponry, including crowbars and sticks of dynamite. Blast the hateful inbred hicks in the knees with both barrels of your shotgun! Collect bottles of whisky and drink yourself insensible! Watch helpless chickens being mown down by speeding trucks! Marry your own sister! (Not available in shareware version.)

CONTROLS:

Cursor keys	Move
Ctrl	Fire
Alt	Strafe
Shift	Run
Return	Use selected item
[]	Scroll through inventory

Specs: DOS/Win 95, 8Mb, Pentium, VGA



Y'ALL READ THIS NOW, Y'HEAR?

Please bear in mind that this is a very early preview of *Redneck Rampage*. So early, in fact, that the first level isn't even finished yet. Therefore you can't complete it. Check out the README.TXT file for more information (and a couple of cheat codes)...

Cave Wars (EIDOS)

The C&C cloning frenzy continues apace with this, a simply dandy prehistoric entry into the genre.

The demo has you playing the Gakkar, who are terrible at researching magic. Their speciality is weapons research. Magic isn't disabled in the demo, so feel free to research it.

You'll start out on Turn 30, and will be able to play until Turn 70. Oh, and here's a few things you might want to know while you're playing... food (the mushrooms) is harvested automatically if you have a city within three squares. Starvation does happen in the game, though, so don't sweat it too much.

You'll also want metal. You can get it with the engineers. They look like big, automated drills, by the way. Just dig into one of the bronze, iron, or mithril deposits, and mine it using the engineer. If you have a city within three squares, the city will take over the mining, leaving the engineer free to do other things, such as more digging or city building.

Specs: DOS, 8Mb, Pentium, SVGA Controls: Mouse



Sim Copter (Maxis)

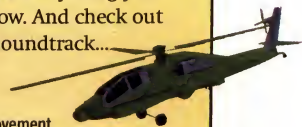
Hands up who remembers *Chopper Squad*, the '70s Aussie helicopter-rescue show. Anyone? Oh, well. It's just that *Sim Copter* reminds us of it a little. With so many gore-sodden, amoral gutfests on this month's CD it'd be easy to condemn a game in which you fly around a city helping people out as a namby-pamby load of old dog. But in practice *Sim Copter* turns out to be completely ace. Once you've installed the

game, follow the on-screen instructions which tell you more or less everything you need to know. And check out that superb soundtrack...

CONTROLS:

Cursors	Movement
Q	Into the wild blue yonder
W	Get down to earth
A	Slide left
S	Slide right
Press CTRL+I	Displays a list of handy keys

Specs: Windows 95 only, 8Mb, Pentium, SVGA Controls: Mouse



Sim Golf (Maxis)

So we've already had a 'chopper' sim from Maxis this month... now here's the 'slicer'. Ha ha ha. Um. Oh. Look, it's a golf game, okay? It's all pretty straightforward really - everything's icon-driven, so just point-and-click to your heart's content. And there's an on-line manual should you get stuck.

Specs: Windows 95 only, 8Mb, Pentium, SVGA Controls: Mouse



Sim Park (Maxis)

Yo, it's like, it's a goddamn park simulator, yeah? Wid trees an' shit. It's from Maxis, the *Sim City 2000* people, so it's more fun than it sounds.

Specs: Windows 95 only, 8Mb, Pentium, SVGA Controls: Mouse



Fallen Haven (Interactive Magic)

The third demo from I-Magic to find its way onto our cover CD - and this time it's a strategy game. Set in a nightmarish future world in which an ancient alien race has declared war on humanity, it's a turn-based orgy of strategic manoeuvres that should have brainboxes everywhere stroking their chins and going 'mmmmmm'. It's a weeny bit complex, so be sure to peruse the accompanying README.TXT file before getting stuck in.

Specs: Windows 95 only, 8Mb, Pentium, SVGA Controls: Mouse



Deathdrome

Huh? Another death-on-wheels game on this month's CD? How can it possibly compete against the mighty *Carmageddon*? Well, it doesn't really have to, since it's actually very different. You take control of a Tron-style

motorbike thing and drive it around inside a sort of cybertwat gladiator's arena, collecting power-ups, shields and missiles, all the better for blowing ten shades of shinola out of everybody else with. It's as fast and smooth as an oily javelin,

not to mention twice as sharp.

CONTROLS:

Cursor keys	Movement
Alt	Fire
Spacebar	Jump
Shift	Weapon lock

Specs: Windows 95 only



AND THERE'S MORE...

Did you heave a huge disappointed sigh when the 'Demo Timeout' caption appeared? Have no fear. The full version of *Carmageddon* will be available soon, replete with a hi-res graphics mode, faster frame rate, and tossloads more cars 'n' courses. Check out SCI's Website at <http://www.sci.co.uk> for further details. And try not to drool.



IMA2 Abrams (Interactive Magic)

It's a kind of tank, don't you know. A rather smart tank, by all accounts. And you've got a chance to test drive one without having to pose as a wealthy dictator and hoodwink your way into a MOD garage sale. Please note that this is a pre-alpha demo of the game, so there are many features that aren't fully implemented. We just thought you might like to see it anyway. We spoil you people, you know that?

Specs: Windows 95 only, 8Mb, Pentium, SVGA
Controls: Mouse



WHO'S BIGGER, WHO'S BEST?

Hey, if the planes from *Air Warrior II* and the tank from *IMA2 Abrams* were people, which one do you reckon would have the biggest knob? Our money's on the tank. But we reckon the plane's balls would be enormous.

Air Warrior II (Interactive Magic)

Comin' at ya from Interactive Magic, it's *Air Warrior II*, the dogfight-a-licious aerial combat sim that allows up to 110 players to link up at the same time. Do you want to go back and read that again? That's right, *one hundred and ten players*. Fair turns your head, doesn't it? Anyway, if you think the visuals are a little spartan, at least you know why. *One hundred and ten*. Gosh. Anyway, we won't bother explaining too much about this demo here because 1) We're lazy, and 2) It's got a step-by-step tutorial, which guides you gently through every aspect of the game. Hokey cokey? Karaoke!

Specs: Win95 only, 8Mb, 486DX, SVGA, modem
Controls: Mouse, keyboard or joystick



Slam Tilt (21st Century)

It's from 21st Century, and it's a pinball game. You want surprises? Go buy a Kinder Egg.

Specs: Windows 95 only, 8Mb, 486DX2, SVGA
Controls: Ctrl keys - Flippers Spacebar - Tilt



Privateer II: The Darkening (EA)

Even if you despised the *Wing Commander* games, you'll love this. It's an ultra-slick space combat/trading epic, featuring some excellent 3D graphics, acres of classy video footage, some 'proper' famous people, and the voice of Dani Behr. We gave it a hulking great 94% a few issues back, and now you can discover why. Uh. That's it. Yeah. Oooh, mmmm. Ahhh. Oh, sorry. Didn't know you were still here.

Read the on-line instructions for more information, because we've decided not to print the controls in full here just to irritate you. Yes, you. The one who's going to write in and complain. We hate you, we do.

Specs: DOS, 8Mb (16Mb recommended), Pentium, SVGA
Controls: Mouse, joystick, keyboard

NB: *Privateer II: The Darkening* must, repeat MUST be run in a 'proper' DOS mode. That is, if you try to play it under Windows 95, it'll just give you the finger and snort derisively. You'll have to close down and restart in DOS mode if you want to play the thing, all right?

ALSO ON THE CD...

This month's CD is so full of joy, we've sort of run out of space here. We'd love to go into detail about everything, but instead we'll have to be content with this brief listing. Be sure to check out the text files on the disc, which contain instructions and notes for the demos...

Noir (Codemasters) Rolling Demo, Win 95

It's a rolling demo, spooled from a spinning CD. Makes you dizzy just thinking about it, doesn't it?

Flip Out! (Gameltek) Win 95

Tile-sliding puzzle game with weirdo, rendered alien things.

Blam! Machinehead (EIDOS) DOS

From Core Design, the *Tomb Raider* people, a frantic game of non-stop large-breasted missile-riding insanity.

Jet Fighter III (EIDOS) DOS

Superb flight sim action with graphics to die for (and crash into).

Street Racer (Ubisoft) DOS

Mario Kart-style multi-player racing extravaganza that first saw the light of day on the good ol' Super Nintendo.

Nemesis (SirTech/Virgin) Win 95

Wizardry fans will start clapping their hands together like unwashed, bearded seals at the news that there's a brand new entry in the series... and *Nemesis* is it.

Culky's Subscription Win 3.1/95

Our very own Culkus has written a song just for you, isn't it? Just click on the 'Culky' icon in your browser and rev your ears up...

Star Command Revolution (GT Interactive) DOS

Those lovely boys from GT Interactive would simply love you to get your playing gear round this slice of deep-space die-hardery, so they've let us put it on the CD for just such a purpose.

Essentials

Our cover CD just wouldn't be the same without an almighty rotating dickload of totally and utterly useful applications and utilities, and this month is no exception. From Paint Shop Pro 4 to Internet Explorer III, if it's worth installing, it's here for your approval...

Beavis And Butt-Head: Little Thingies (MTV Interactive/Virgin)

The compulsive sniggerers return in this parade of puerile pandemonium. *Little Thingies* are neat-o wickle arcade games designed to relieve the stress and strains of everyday office life. The full release contains seven of these golden nuggets - consider this demo the appetiser before the main course.

Specs: Windows 95 only, 8Mb, 486DX, SVGA
Controls: Mouse



Magic: The Gathering (MicroProse)

Inexplicably popular things keep cropping up all over the place - *London's Burning*, *Boyzone*, *Melinda Messenger* and body-piercing spring readily to mind. Well, here's another one to chalk up on the blackboard labelled "In God's Name, WHY???" *Magic: The Gathering* has an obsessive fanbase the likes of which hasn't been seen since the glory years of *Dungeons & Dragons*. And generally speaking, its followers are twice as bearded and weird. Still, who are we to cast aspersions? We do all kinds of things that many would consider 'sad' (or 'sick' or 'appalling'). We just don't admit to them in public, that's all. Still, the bottom line is this: if you like *Magic: The Gathering* in 'real life', then you'll lap up this computerised version like a Californian porn queen during the final 'shoot' on the hottest day of the year. And please don't think about that last sentence for too long because it was a bit out of order really.



Specs: DOS, 8Mb, Pentium, SVGA
Controls: Mouse

ECSTASY

FINALLY A GAME THAT COMBINES MENTAL
CHALLENGE OF OUTWITTING YOUR
OPPONENT WITH THE PHYSICAL CHALLENGE OF
SLITTING HIS THROAT EAR TO EAR.

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PC
CD
ROM



FREE!!!



Wireplay CD

It's good to talk... but it's even better to blow people out of the sky. Welcome to the digital arena that is Wireplay – the on-line service that's solely dedicated to bringing PC gamers together... head on. All you need is your PC, a modem, and a large helping of true grit – no Internet account is

required, since the service is charged on a 'pay as you play' basis, automatically added to your phone bill.

The bonus CD nailed to our front cover contains all the software you need to get started – including a couple of free games (namely Wireplay software versions of the awesome *EF2000* and the super-fast *Big Red Racing*). The Wireplay software will also allow you to play some of your all-time faves (including *Duke 3D*, *Red Alert* and *Warcraft II*) over the Wireplay network, and there's even a slew of set-up software for the BT Internet service. What's that you say? How do you set it all up? Well, we'll tell you...

Games without frontiers

Here's a complete list of the Wireplay games you can play:

Wireplay-specific

Big Red Racing (Wireplay-enhanced retail version)

Big Red Racing (Wireplay shareware edition)

EF2000 (Wireplay edition)

Euro 96

Others

Advanced Tactical Fighter

Command & Conquer

Conquest Of The New World

Descent

Descent 2

Doom (v1.9)

Doom 2

Duke Nukem 3D

IndyCar 2

Command & Conquer: Red Alert

Terminal Velocity

Virtual Pool

Virtual Snooker

Warcraft 2

Demos

Descent 2 (demo)

Doom (shareware version)

Warcraft 2 (demo)

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

Minimum system requirements

- 486 PC or above
- 16Mb RAM
- A BT phone line and modem (check with other providers for compatibility)
- CD-ROM drive
- Your eyes, head and hands

How to get your Wireplay CD working...

At the DOS prompt, switch to your CD drive (by typing the appropriate letter, usually D:), then run the install program by typing INSTALL. If you're running Windows 95 you can simply double-click upon the relevant icon to get the ball rolling. Follow the instructions that pop up on the menu system and the software will be installed onto your hard drive into the WIREPLAY directory. From then on, at the DOS prompt you'll have



to type CD WIREPLAY and then WIREPLAY to run the software and get on-line.

NB DOS users should note that the *EF2000* multimedia demo will only install and run from within Windows 95.

FOUR EASY STEPS...

1. When you first log-on, you'll be asked to input certain details at the REGISTRATION menu (you don't have to register if you don't want to, but it's a good way to keep up to date with the latest competitions and offers).
2. Next, you'll have to input details of your modem and processor at the TECHNICAL SETUP screen.
3. Check out the NOTICE BOARD to post or accept a challenge.
4. Go to the LOCKER ROOM to chat to your opponents (you might want to agree the rules before you play). Click on the START icon and the software will launch the game, so make sure you're ready for action.

You can meet up here afterwards to arrange a re-match or hurl insults. In tournaments and competitions you can check out the scores and ratings here.

BT Internet software

- Get on the Internet the easy way with BT. It's so easy, even Bob Hoskins could do it.

To start surfing the Web, simply run the SETUP program from the root directory of the CD to explore the big wide world of the World Wide Web.

- Once you've gone through the set-up routine, you'll need to type in the following code: MAG0000002 to get on-line.

- N.B. While connection is free, a monthly subscription of £11.75 will be charged to your Visa or Mastercard account and that all calls thereafter will be charged at local rates.

- If you get stuck call the helpline on 0345 776666. This is a Lo-Call number – and it's open 24hrs a day, seven days a week.

NB Wireplay and BT Internet are separate services: you don't need one to use the other... capisce?

IMPORTANT! O!! READ THIS!!

Wireplay doesn't charge for subscriptions – it's a 'pay as you play' service. Calls are charged at just 2.5p per minute during the evenings (after 6pm) and all day long at weekends and 6p per minute before 6pm on weekdays. The minimum charge is 5p. Wireplay calls will appear on your phone bill as a 'Wireplay' number.

Customers using phone lines that are not supplied by BT may encounter difficulties if their phone company has not made the relevant technical arrangements – you are advised to check with your telephone service provider before logging on.

STUCK?

Please note that the Wireplay CD is supplied by BT. If you run into any difficulties, BT have a special number for you to call, where a smooth-voiced operator will hold your hand and talk you through the problem (think of that *Airport* film where Karen Black is told how to land the plane by the bloke in the control tower – it'll be just like that, only without the danger).

The number to call is:

0345 577577 (Lo-Call number)

Open: Mon-Sun 10am-10pm
E-mail: support@wireplay.com

If, on the other hand, you're having problems with the BT Internet set-up, you need to call the following number...

0345 776666 (Lo-Call number)

...which is open a frankly staggering 24hrs a day, seven days a week!

NB Please DO NOT call Dennis Publishing if you have a problem with the Wireplay CD as, despite our best intentions, we really WON'T be able to help you. Got that?



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WIN! WIN! WIN!

Big Red Racing Competition!

Tourney time! Fancy a downright lunatic on-line racing challenge against your fellow *Zone* readers? Reckon yourself, do yer? Come on then. Come on. We dare you (yes, you) to enter the *PC Zone Big Red Racing Competition*. There's a whole bunch of Virgin Megastore vouchers to be won – the eventual King of the Hill will be walking away with a full £100 to spend – so quit faffing around reading this, and get hooked up, right?



All you need to do is to set up the Wireplay software, then install the *Big Red Racing* shareware included on the CD. Log on to Wireplay, then check out the Wireplay News for info on the 'PC Zone Official *Big Red Racing Knockout*' and the latest details on how to enter the contest.

As sharp-eyed readers will have gathered, the competition will be run on a knockout basis – but don't feel too hard-done by if you're eliminated early on, as a 'wooden spoon' league for the loser types

will be running concurrently with the main event (and there'll be prizes on offer there, too). The contest is pencilled in to start on 21 March, so get practising now.

What's that you say? You haven't got *Big Red Racing*? Yes you have! It's on the bloody CD! What's more, it's a darn fine game, as you'll soon discover. Simply install the demo from the main Wireplay install menu, and you're off. Please note that the game requires 8Mb to run in single-player mode, and 16Mb to run over the Wireplay network...

BIG RED RACING

(EIDOS Interactive)

If it's fast and furious racing fun you're after, then look no further than *Big Red Racing*. It's arguably one of the finest multi-player racing games around (as anyone with access to a network will tell you – groan), and now you can try it out for yourself and see just how satisfying it is to knock a human control vehicle off the track.

To get yourself going, just follow the instructions on the CD (you will need to install and run the game before you attempt to dial into a race) and off you go.

The basic controls are listed below, but if you need more info access the README.TXT file on the Wireplay CD.

Controls:

Cursor up	Accelerate
Cursor down	Brake/reverse
Cursor left	Duuuuuhhh
Cursor right	Buuuhhhhh
Insert	Nitro

NB Pressing Right-CTRL will put you back on the track if you get hopelessly lost

F1	View next racer
F2	Third-person view
F3	First-person view
F4	Track mounted camera
Esc	Quit (Please note that the game will continue until all players have hit Esc)
Shift + Esc	Instant Quit

EF2000 (DID)

Everyone knows that flight sims are best played over a network. Sending another member of the human race hurtling towards the ground in a ball of flames is infinitely more satisfying than taking out a pixel-pilot. Although new flight sims have recently come onto the market, *EF2000* is still up there with the best of 'em, sporting unrivalled graphics and a superb multi-player option. And now you can see for yourself just how fantastic it really is, thanks to Wireplay.

Listed below is a brief outline of the controls to get you started. For more info check out the README.TXT file on the Wireplay CD (it's in the EXTRAS folder).

Controls

Learning this first batch of keys will help you to actually get off the ground. The first time you enter the game you'll find yourself parked outside your hanger. Turn on your engines, increase your throttle to about 70% and taxi out to the runway. Line yourself up on the runway and ignite the afterburners. Before you know it you'll be airborne and ready for your first engagement. Alternatively, you could 'cheat' and ignite those burners right away – just make sure you don't collide with any of the airfield buildings!

P

Pause game, but still have access to the cockpit functions
Retracts or lowers the landing gear

G

< or >

Move rudder left and right and steer aircraft when taxiing
Left and right engines on/off
Throttle up/down

[and]

+ and -

NUMERIC KEYPAD *

NUMERIC KEYPAD /

B

Afterburner on

W

Afterburner off

L

Airbrake on/off

Wheelbrake on/off

Auto leveller/auto recovery

When you're airborne take a few moments to look around and familiarise yourself with your cockpit surroundings. You could even have a quick glance at the multitude of camera views. It's wise to learn these, too – a good pilot will know exactly where his foes are at all times!

ENTER

SPACEBAR

C

Scroll through the AA weapons

INSERT

Fire weapons

DELETE

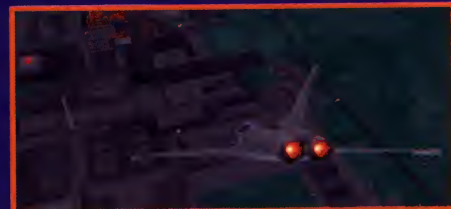
Cycles through targets

Activate jamming

Release chaff manually

Release flare manually

Finally, if you get shot down or crash into the ground you'll re-appear on the runway. If you were killed by enemy fire you'll have about 20 seconds of invincibility to get off the ground. If you ploughed into the ground you're fair game. It's a little mean, but shooting pilots while they're on the runway is a great way to rack up those kill points.



If you're experiencing difficulties in getting *EF2000* Wireplay to work you should call the Wireplay Helpdesk on 0345 577577 (10am-10pm). Alternatively you can access the Wireplay Web page at [HTTP://WWW.WIREPLAY.COM](http://www.wireplay.com). You could even visit Digital Image Design's Web page at [HTTP://WWW.DID.COM](http://www.did.com). There you'll find details of DID's forthcoming releases as well as top playing tips.

NB: This version of *EF2000* will only work as a Wireplay game. There are no single-player missions.

eXtreme gameplay warning

ROBOTRONTM

200 level alert



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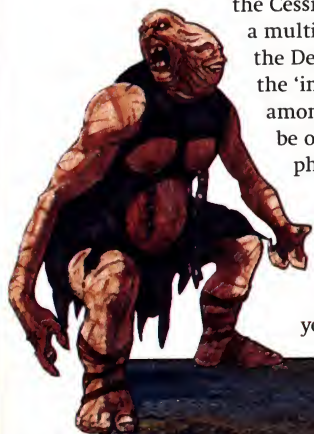
BULLETIN

A flight into darkness

Famous for both their flight simulations and role-playing games, US developers Looking Glass have announced a new one of each genre as a reminder that they're still the best.

LOOKING GLASS TECHNOLOGIES HAVE NE'ER put a foot wrong throughout their long and illustrious career. Classics such as *The Stygian Abyss*, *Labyrinth Of Worlds*, *System Shock* and *Flight Unlimited* all broke new ground in gameplay versus visuals, and so it is with some interest that we note two new announcements from the Cambridge-based (Massachusetts) development house.

Flight Unlimited II (the current working title) is a somewhat predictable announcement, but it's nevertheless a welcome one. Bettering every aspect of its predecessor, *Flight Unlimited II* now allows the great unwashed access to the Cessna 172, the Piper Arrow, a multi-engine Beech Baron, the De Havilland Beaver and the 'infamous' P-51D Mustang, among many others. There'll be over 8500 square miles of photo-realistic terrain to fly over around the San Francisco Bay Area and 45 different airports to land at, depending on what kind of cargo you're pretending to



Will *Flight Unlimited II* turn into the gaming equivalent of going for a walk? Hey you guys, how about that 'secret machinegun' option we've always been after?



Coming from the same people that brought us the *Ultima Underworld* series of adventures, will *The Dark Project* push computer role-playing to new heights?

smuggle in at the time. Every building over ten stories is also to be recreated in full 3D, so if you're playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, you'll be able to see exactly where you are.

Returning to their role-playing roots, Looking Glass have also revealed plans for their 'top secret' real-time 3D RPG *The Dark Project*, due for release at the end of the year. Looking Glass have welcomed Warren Spector onboard as executive producer of *The Dark Project* - he's the man who produced *The Stygian Abyss* and *Labyrinth Of Worlds* at Origin Systems.

Incorporating highly atmospheric lighting and water effects, *The Dark Project* will feature mission-based gameplay and an interface that uses 'Act/React' technology. Act/React will apparently aid intuitive interaction within



Flight Unlimited II's landscapes are better than those in the original, there's no doubting that. But at what price to run the game as intended?

the gaming environment.

Initial signs indicate a medieval look with a fantasy feel, accompanied by dark, cathedral-esque architecture brought to life with subtle lighting effects. Providing Spector and his team concentrate on deeper plotlines and improved environment dynamics, we should be in for a heck of a game. The 3D role-playing genre is at last starting to mature, and considering the experience of *The Dark Project*'s producer, we can only expect the very best.

EIDOS Interactive have won the right to take care of Looking Glass' games in the UK, and will be announcing release dates soon. Until then, keep an eye on <http://www.lglass.com> for updates. **Z**



Underworld on-line

THE ON-LINE GAMING COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN INVITED to play a special on-line version of *Ultima Underworld II* which is due to be up and running on the first Tuesday in April. An on-line version of this RPG classic has supposedly been in the works for some time, with most of the graft being undertaken in the programmer's spare time. Allegedly. Characters will apparently be able to explore independently, and a conversation system, similar to that in the original game, will almost certainly allow the usual profane chat. See <http://www.aprilfool.co.uk> for more. **Z**



Unbelievable! Put the first Tuesday in April in your diary now - the on-line version of *Ultima Underworld II* is set to take the world by storm?!

A whiter shade of trash

Yee-haw! Coming soon to a trailer park near you is *Redneck Rampage* from Interplay, a bizarre take on the first-person 3D shoot 'em up.

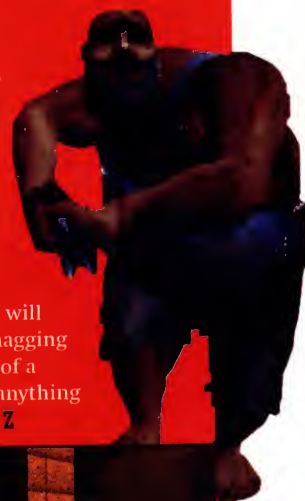
SET IN THE DEEPEST SOUTHERN OUTBACKS OF the United States, *Redneck Rampage* blatantly takes the piss out of the drooling inbreds who populate the shambling shantytowns that make up much of the most powerful nation on Earth.

Interplay are keen to stress that it's just for fun though, and the suitably twisted storyline finds two lovable hicks – Leonard and Bubba – understandably upset at the loss of their prize-winning pig, Bessie. Inevitably, alien abduction is to blame, and a sinister plot is afoot: the darned space critters have been systematically

cloning the residents of Hickston, Arkansas (twinned with Buttpoke, Ohio) and turning them into shotgun-wielding homicidal maniacs. No change there then. To put an end to this unholy business, the god-fearing player has to don his very best pair of dungarees and attempt to administer some good old-fashioned jurisdiction; the action encompassing a tornado-ravaged trailer park, a poultry processing plant, and the local sewage works.

Set for an April release, *Redneck Rampage* is worth a look for comedy value alone, but it also promises to be a half-decent game. Developed by Xatrix Entertainment, it uses the same *Build* engine as *Duke Nukem* and is accompanied by

some rousing tunes, courtesy of Mojo Nixon, Beat Farmers and The Reverend Horton Heat. Part *Deliverance*, part *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, it's highly likely to cause offence to anyone south of the Mason-Dixon line; although most of them will probably be too busy shagging their sister in the back of a pickup truck to know anything about it. Squeal Piggy! **Z**



Play the demo on our cover



Both barrels in the face. Never mind boy, there's a better world awaitin' in the sky, Lord, in the sky.



A good excuse to shoot up some rednecks – blame an alien invasion! Try telling that to the police.



For mature players only: *Redneck Rampage* contains swearwords such as 'shit' and 'bastard', which is a blessed relief.



Go on then, make my day. Take one step further chicken, and you is gonna be one tasty casserole!

A classic of Grand Guignol



We're sure that there'll be plenty of tickets available for Mirage's new play – an enticing little ditty now showing at the Theatre Of Pain.

THE UNCOMPROMISINGLY ENTITLED THEATRE *Of Pain* is the latest in a long line of side-on beat 'em ups from the Cheshire-based gaming stalwarts at Mirage. It seems they've learnt much from their *Rise Of The Robots* experiences and are now ready to show the world what they're really capable of.

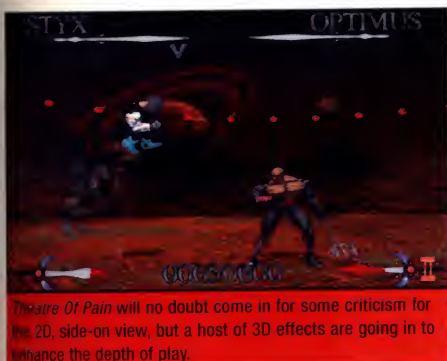
Mirage themselves describe *Theatre Of Pain* as a "graphically violent weapon-based fighting game", which is a very PC way of putting it. Even the blood spilt in the game reacts in exactly the same way as real claret, thanks to something called the 'intelligent blood display system'. What next – a fully modelled human skeleton with bones that break?

Of course there'll be an unfathomable combination of moves, specials and combos which, once mastered, will amaze your friends. Twelve opponents, four of whom remain hidden until you beat the first eight,



block the way to the end, and hideous, brutal violence is the only language they understand.

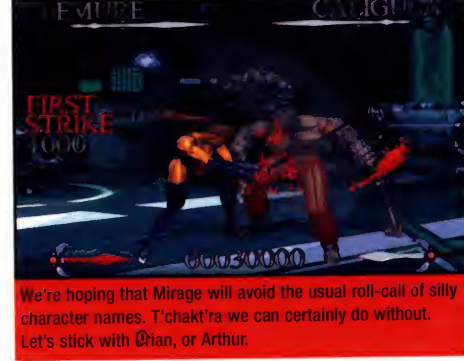
Graphically, *Theatre Of Pain* looks tremendous. All the bells and whistles are present and correct; real-time zooming, transparency, shadowing, realistic lighting – the full monty. High and lo-res options, as well as almost infinite tweakability, should cater for most PCs, with generous skill level options suited to the majority of gamers. **Z**



Theatre Of Pain will no doubt come in for some criticism for the 2D, side-on view, but a host of 3D effects are going in to enhance the depth of play.



You take a slamming left hook from the guy in the blue. You certainly felt that. Your jaw, now separated from your face, lies at your feet. What do you do next?



We're hoping that Mirage will avoid the usual roll-call of silly character names. T'chakt'ra we can certainly do without. Let's stick with Brian, or Arthur.

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Curly's Adventure looks suspiciously like Day Of The Tentacle, which is hopefully a good omen for the game.



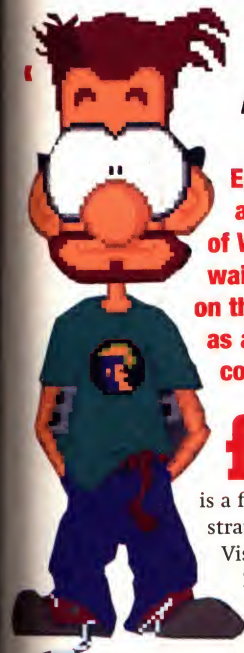
Real-time strategy wargaming, Epic MegaGames style. 7th Legion is the latest in a long line of genre announcements.



Epic's 7th Legion, LucasArts' Rebellion, Activision's Dark Reign, Broderbund's WarBreeds - where's it all gonna end?



The 'zany' 'madcap' adventures of some geezer called Curly. Hey Curly - alwight geeze! Aas it goin'?



An epic tale

Epic MegaGames have a disparate triumvirate of Windows 95 games waiting to be unleashed on these shores as soon as a UK distributor is confirmed.

ALTHOUGH ONLY A working title at the moment, 7th Legion is a futuristic real-time action strategy game developed by Vision Software of New Zealand. Designed as both a single and a multi-player game, players construct armies and weapons, including giant walking robots, infantry and tanks, leading them into battle across multiple rendered locations. Unlike the

majority of games of this genre, 7th Legion uses a budget system which dispenses with the need for harvesting and mining. Credits are awarded at a set time rate with bonuses for destroying enemy units and buildings, thus placing the emphasis on wanton bloodshed.

Curly's Adventure is something of a change of tack, being a colourful point-and-click adventure set in a lunatic asylum. The fact that the patients are hooked into a Hydroponic Brain-Krisper created by the evil maniacal genius Julio Googanschmelter Jr should be enough for you to make an educated guess as to the tone of the game. The titular Curly is one such patient, labouring under the impression that he's from the planet Mudball in the Andalusian Galaxy. Perhaps he is, or perhaps he's clinically insane. Should we care?

Ages Of Wonder is a return to a time when Elves, Dwarves and Orcs inhabited the Earth, although when that time was is never actually specified. Essentially a hex-based game of



Chronically challenged in the personal hygiene department? Then you may warm to a game of Ages Of Wonder. A new game for goblin fans, now in colour!

conquest, it also throws in elements of strategy, adventure and role-playing. Exploration plays a big part, with umpteen crypts, ruins and treasure-filled dungeons to be discovered. With 11 main races - Humans, Azracs, Lizardmen, Elves, Dwarves, Halflings, Dark Elves, Orcs, Goblins, Frostlings and Undead - as well as all the spells and magic you'd reasonably expect, Ages Of Wonder promises hundreds of hours of gameplay - for Goblin fans anyway.

Epic's Website has even more info, so seek it out at <http://www.epicgames.co.uk> for the full lowdown. **Z**

This is the dawning of the Age Of Empires

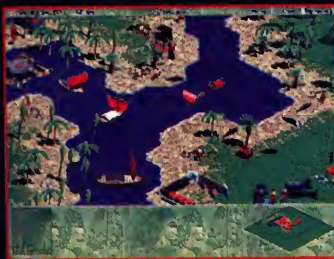
Can Bill Gates make computer games? Judging by the abysmal Microsoft Soccer, you wouldn't have thought so. Maybe this new strategy game will show what he can do?

TAKE ONE CIVILIZATION AND EXTRACT THE HISTORIC AND STRATEGIC elements. Remove the real-time decision-making and animations from a fresh Warcraft or Command & Conquer, making sure that an adult is present when using sharp implements. Mix all the ingredients into a thick paste and simmer gently for an unspecified amount of time. Makes an excellent summer dish for up to eight guests.

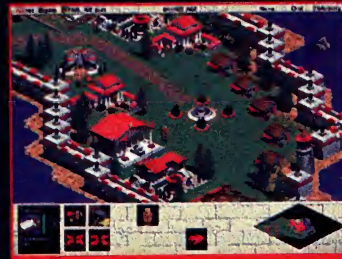
Microsoft's Age Of Empires begins at the dawn of civilisation, and spans some 10,000 years up to around 1000AD. Lead designer Bruce Shelley (he worked with Sid Meier on Civ) is keen to emphasise that a lot of effort has gone into the single-player mode, appreciating that multi-player is still a comparatively minority activity. Selecting one of 12 cultures, from China to Assyria, the idea is to build a city, amass forces, exploit resources, and kick the arse of anyone encroaching on your manor. **Z**



The idea of historical real-time combat games has never really been exploited to the full. Imagine Red Alert, but set in WWII, Napoleonic times, or in Vietnam (see Cannon Fodder circa 1994).



Age Of Empires' mixture of real-time decision-making...



...and Civ-style resource management could make or break the game.



The Next Big Thing from those power-mad at people at Microsoft: Age Of Empires...



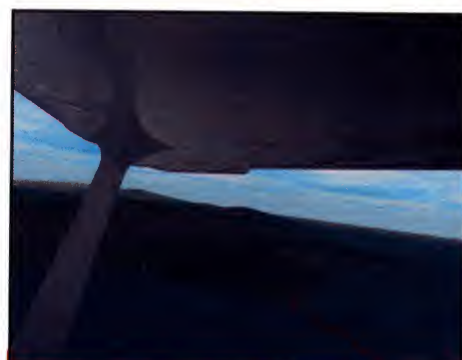
...an isometric strategy game from an age ruled by Cecil B DeMille.



Hey! If Looking Glass can build a secret 'machine gun' mode into their game, why on earth can't you?! Just think of the fun you could have, uuuuhh...



Those of you looking for a holiday in the United States or Canada may wish to use *Sierra Pro Pilot* as reconnaissance before making your booking...



Civilian flight sim fans take note - SubLogic are involved in this one. But can their reputation and know-how produce the sim to beat them all?

« Calling all budding pilots...

The recently prolific Sierra are now reaching for the skies with a foray into the wonderful and frightening world of flight simulation

SIERRA PRO PILOT IS SET FOR A MAY RELEASE and promises to be a comprehensive introduction to the fundamentals of flying civilian aircraft. Starring five different planes, flight fans will no doubt be enthralled to learn that they are (in order of complexity) the Cessna 172 Skyhawk, the Beechcraft Bonanza, the Beechcraft Super King 300, the Cessna 185 and the Cessna Citation Jet, each meticulously modelled for exact realism. By

completing an interactive training course featuring 50 full-motion videos and a personal instructor, the player can earn a private pilot certificate which can then be upgraded to a commercial licence by successfully negotiating a series of flight assignments graded on safety, efficiency and airmanship.

Sierra Pro Pilot will allow the player to fly all over America and Canada, confronted by a



choice of more than 2500 airports, not to mention 27 million elevation points (whatever they are).

Twenty major metropolitan areas are represented, as

are numerous other cities, roads, railways, rivers and lakes, the terrain and relief created using Sierra's renowned 3Space technology. With the involvement of the highly reputable SubLogic, Sierra are hoping that this will be the flight sim to finally break the Microsoft monopoly.

<http://www.sierra.com> for more on *Pro Pilot*. Z

Happy happy joy joy

The latest news from the high-flying PC game controller market

SPECTRA VIDEO ARE claiming a first in the cut-throat world of the PC control pad. The PC Power Pad Pro (try saying that after eight pints of high-strength continental lager) features both an analogue joystick and a digital joypad, cunningly designed to be used on the one control pad. For £24.99 you also get nine fire buttons, an analogue throttle control and auto-fire. A Windows 95 driver is included and, inevitably, the pad is ergonomic.

For a tenner more, Spectra Video are also offering the PC 3D Program Pad (try saying that etc...) which can be used either as a gameport fire-button pad or as a keyboard emulator, a dual-connector allowing normal six-button or 3D gameplay. Again, a Windows 95 driver disk is supplied. You lucky people. Z

(Right) The PC Power Pad Pro: analogue and digital control from the same pad.

(Above) The PC 3D Program Pad: keyboard emulation and '3D gameplay'.

You're about as easy as a nuclear war

Not the best title for a news piece, but we promise not to do it again. Now, where were we?

BEFORE COMPUTERS WERE INVENTED, STEVE JACKSON MADE HIS FORTUNE writing adventure books. Largely consisting of lists of options and instructions - "Chtorr is dead. Turn to page 34" - they sold by the shedload, mainly to pasty-faced males who had yet to discover what their balls were for. Audiences are a little more demanding these days, and Jackson is now heavily involved in this crazy business we call games.

The latest project is *Fallout: A GURPS Postnuclear Adventure*, which is an acronym for Generic Universal Role-Playing System. Yes, it's an RPG, and as the title suggests, it's set 80 years after a nuclear war. Now the water recycler serving the vault-ridden survivors has failed and somebody has to leave the confines of the hermetically-sealed micro-environment to fix it, and that unfortunate person is you. Providing of course that you buy the game when it's released in May courtesy of Interplay.

<http://www.interplay.com> for more GURP-ular fun. Z



From maze books to maze games, *GURPS* (pardon me) is a tricky blend of puzzle-solving, and walking the Earth like Kane out of *Kung Fu*.

Into the Viper's nest

From the people who created *Tunnel B1* for Ocean comes *Viper* – a 3D arcade helicopter shoot 'em up with a difference

N EON, THE GERMAN-BASED DEVELOPERS responsible for the strangely alluring *Tunnel B1*, have a deadly new weapon up their sleeve. It's codenamed *Viper* and they will be sharing it with us in September this year.

The *Viper* is an ultra-futuristic attack helicopter sent to rid the Earth of a sinister alien infiltration team that plans to take over the world. *Viper's* roots lie with the traditional vertically-scrolling shoot 'em up, although this time the backgrounds and on-screen objects will be brought to life in full 3D and can be viewed from virtually any angle. Imagine

a 90's Zaxxon (*Famous arcade blaster* – Ed) with lots of special effects such as glowing balls, lens flare, star rays, light beams, smoke and fire, and you'll probably be as far away from the answer as you possibly could be... only joking. No, *Viper* mixes viewing angles depending on where you are in the game – normal sections will feature a top-down, three-quarter view, with end-of-level bosses attacking from behind the helicopter directly into the scene. You have to be there, really.

PC Zone will be popping over to Germany to see *Viper* at some point in the near future, so stay tuned for more info. **Z**



As with Neon's previous game (*Tunnel B1*) *Viper* is not only a gorgeous looking game, but it's also graced with gorgeous pre-rendered sequences.



Obviously, when not saving the world from marauding bad guys, all self-respecting German helicopter pilots love to enjoy their burgers 'al fresco' as it were.

Stick it to 'em!

Currently hawking their wares at the CEBIT show, Saitek announce a new range of flight peripherals at an affordable price

T HE X36F FLIGHTSTICK IS THE RATHER uninspiring name of Saitek's new sleek-looking, many-buttoned flight controller. The high-grip rubber finish is apparently only eclipsed by the x36f's durability and, although

not ThrustMaster compatible, it will feature unlimited programmability and will work with any game. If you look closely at the stick pictured here, you may also notice the 'flip-up' launch button at the top – which is a neat idea – though whether it will be a working feature we aren't yet able to confirm.

The complementary x36 Flight Controller has throttle, rudder, two rotary controls, three hat switches (eight-way), serial mouse control, 'pinkie status indicators' (whatever they are...), and a four-way hat switch to add to the already burgeoning features of the x36f. An x36 launch bundle (which includes both throttle and stick) should be available by the time you read this, priced £99. For more information call 01454 855050. **Z**



'2000AD is 20' competition

Enter now and you could win a subscription to *The Galaxy's Greatest Comic!*



Those guys at Bullfrog read cult comic *2000AD* – look, here's the big chin himself, Judge Dredd in *Syndicate Wars*!

E AGLE-EYED READERS WHO SPOTTED JUDGE DREDD and his companions in Bullfrog's *Syndicate Wars* may like to know that they were incorporated in celebration of *The Galaxy's Greatest Comic's* twentieth anniversary, which falls this March.

And yeah, we know, it's from a rival publisher, but what the heck – it's influenced popular culture more than people care to admit, and most of us grew up on it. Even Sly Stallone reads it (or perhaps he'd like us to think he did).

Now past its thousandth issue (a mean feat in itself), *2000AD* still proves popular with its new wave of characters such as Nikolai Dante and Bertie & Trace, combined with old favourites like Dredd and Rogue Trooper.

So, ladies and gentlemen, if you'd like to raise your glasses in a toast please...

Anyway, to stave off the 'Thrill Suckers', we're giving away a free half-year subscription of *2000AD* to the first ten people who answer the following question correctly:

Question: Who played Judge Dredd in the eponymously titled motion picture? (please circle the correct one)

- A. Clint Eastwood B. Fatima Whitbread**
C. Sylvester Stallone

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Send your entries to:
'It's not Clint Eastwood or Fatima Whitbread'
PC Zone, CPCZ74C
Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions
Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ

Rules: All entries to be received by 20 April 1997.
The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into, so don't even think about hassling us to see if you have won.



©1997 Intel Corporation. *As compared to a Pentium® processor without MMX™ technology at same speed measured on Intel's Media Benchmark.

Guess who makes the Pentium® processor even more fun?



Among the highly trained technicians who manufacture Intel Pentium® processors, a certain group stands out. They work in the MMX™ media enhancement technology department and have been specially trained to do one thing: add fun to the Pentium processor. PCs that have a Pentium processor with



MMX technology give you richer colour, fuller sound, smoother video and faster graphics.* And when combined with software designed for MMX technology, you'll get the most from your multimedia. MMX technology from Intel. It's the technical term for fun. www.intel.com

intel®

The Computer Inside.™

Looking for a golf game?



What you can't see from this screenshot is how the whole thing moves. It's all animated real-time, with texture-mapped polygons for a real sense of scale.



ABC's *Wide World Of Sport* does air in this country – check your cable or satellite provider for details. It's there that you will find the commentator Mr Jim McKay.



British Open Championship Golf is currently without a UK distributor. Chances are it will be picked up by EIDOS, who recently announced other interests at Looking Glass.

A surprise contender for the golfing crown as the ubiquitous Looking Glass command *The Open*

LOOKING GLASS TECHNOLOGIES HAVE YET TO find a UK distributor for their new golf game, which is all the more surprising when you consider that it's based on The Open Championship. Traditionally the golfing calendar's premier event – hence its definitive prefix – The Open is the oldest championship in the world, originally conceived in Scotland towards the end of the

last century. Americans smugly (and wrongly) refer to it as The British Open, and Looking Glass have followed suit, naming their game *British Open Championship Golf*.

Regular viewers of ABC's *Wide World Of Sport* will almost certainly be tuning in from America, but they will probably recognise the voice of Jim McKay, who has been commentating on The Open since 1962. McKay provides the chat for *British Open Championship Golf*, which boasts more than 5000 unique phrases. He has also contributed a somewhat hyperbolic media-friendly soundbite, which goes thus: "Looking Glass have succeeded brilliantly in

recreating on the computer the realism, grandeur and excitement of this wonderful tournament." Cheers.

Whether he's 'lying' or not remains to be seen, but accurate ball dynamics are promised, as well as an advanced physics engine and a facility to design your own shots and save them for later use. Golf wouldn't be golf without shit weather, and so naturally the game features authentic conditions that actually affect the ball dynamics, with rain, wind and fog adding to the experience. As mentioned earlier, there's no UK distributor, hence no grossly optimistic release date. **Z**

Drop in the Ocean for Merit

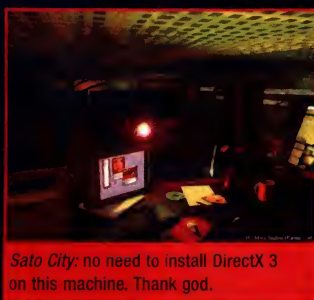
The Geordie lads and lasses up at Merit sign a canny deal for their new racing game with Ocean

FORMERLY KNOWN AS BOTH *Hooters* and *Oddball Engines*, Merit Studio's 'wacky' racing game has finally been christened and a distributor confirmed. *Motor Mash* will be published by Ocean Software in April, and it's a multi-player cartoon racer with graphics from the same team that brought you *Bud Tucker In Double Trouble*. Featuring 12 characters with names like Al Machino, Robert DeZero and Action Stan – to name but a few, it sounds hilarious (at least, in much the same way that *Noel's House Party* is hilarious).

Also pending from Merit is *Sato City*, which they are publishing themselves.



Shades of *Supersonic Racers* in Merit's *Motor Mash*. Have we seen it all before?



Sato City: no need to install DirectX 3 on this machine. Thank god.

Again created by much of the *Bud Tucker* team, it's a tech-noir thriller set in a dark and brutal future – a world of corruption, high technology and ultra violence. "John Woo meets *Blade Runner*" is as media-friendly a soundbite as you're likely to come across, and this is how Merit are describing it. Look out for *Sato City* later this year. **Z**

Goodness gracious great balls of steel!

Shock horror! Creators of *Duke Nukem 3D* in rude pinball game name rumour...



We love pinball games so much that we can't wait for Apogee's *Balls Of Steel*. Honest guv.

HILARIOUS DOUBLE-entendres abound this month with the announcement by EIDOS Interactive of *Balls Of Steel*, a pinball game developed by Apogee Software, creators of *Duke Nukem 3D*.

Pinball is a notable deviation from their usual fare, although Duke does makes a guest appearance in the game, a *Duke Nukem* table being among those on offer.

Sensibly, *Balls Of Steel* features two methods of play: a scrolling affair with part of the table obscured, or the option to play via a smaller static screen to display the entire table. You decide. As yet there's no release date, although our rampant newshounds will have one as soon as is humanly possible. **Z**

Pooh... what's that smell?

Fishing is a popular pastime in this country, and Gametek are flinging out their hooks with their new game, *The Art Of Fly Fishing*

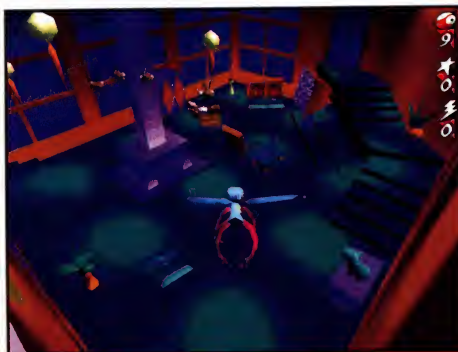
YES, YOU FLY FISHING FREAKS CAN NOW "live the sights and sounds of three prestigious American game-fishing rivers and watch them come to life with photo-realistic graphics" which, considering the state of the fly fishing game market at the moment, must come as something of a relief.

The game will show off advanced fish behaviour patterns, as well as a realistic water physics model to emulate river flow. Graphically, *TAFF* looks like a rambler's holiday photo album, which is no bad thing, but as for how it plays – that'll be for us to decide when we give it to Cully for review. Armchair anglers should get ready to prepare their bait for a June release. **z**



The Art Of Fly Fishing will also contain an extensive multimedia library of information for the angler.

No flies on us



In a humorous scene from *Banzai Bug*, Dad tears one out at regular intervals. Well, we thought it was funny...

A chance to win Banzai Bug and his merry band of buggers!

BANZAI BUG IS ONE OF THE ONLY GAMES around that'll let you spew on food! Unfortunately there aren't any turds to walk on, but we'll console ourselves with the fact that you get to spit in this game. And as Beavis & Butt-Head would say: "We all know that spitting's cool."

Being a fast-paced action flight game, *Banzai Bug*'s 'quirky' outlook on the trials and tribulations of a filthy insect should appeal to bluebottle simulator fans everywhere. The



Mad eyeeees! This kid has obviously been eating too much sugar – he's got maaaaaad eyes!

colourful 'trippy' imagery should sort everyone else out too.

So if you want to get the bug, we're giving away ten of the following:

- A copy of *Banzai Bug* CD-ROM (sorted)
- A Survival Kit (which includes a *Banzai Bug* ashtray)
- A Fly Swatter (which doubles as a spatula...)
- Anti-Stinkulator Spray (deodorant, we hope)
- A selection of Grolier games ('cos they can't flog 'em)

The first ten readers with the correct answer to this question will win the job lot.



Question Who were the first men to fly? (Circle the correct answer)

A. The Wrong Brothers

B. The Wright Brothers

C. The Doobie Brothers

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Send your entries to: 'It's not The Righteous Brothers' PC Zone, CP274A, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ.

Rules: All entries to be received by 20 April 1996. The Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

PREMIER MANAGER 97

A new era dawns in soccer management...

COMING SOON



Dispatches

EIDOS SIGN ION STORM

The bidding war for the most sought-after development team in the history of development teams has finally come to an end, with moneybags EIDOS signing John Romero's ION Storm on a mega-bucks, multi-title, ten-year publishing deal.

John Romero, co-founder of ION Storm and head designer at id Software, was a key creator and developer of some of the best-selling games of all time, including titles such as *Doom*, *Hexen* and *Quake*, which made his new company hot unsigned property – until now. Romero's team is currently beaver away on a number of action/adventure/role-playing games, the first of which will be released through EIDOS around Christmas this year.

Commenting for EIDOS, CEO Charles Cornwall had this to say about the new deal:

"We are extremely excited about this partnership as it combines the industry's top game designers and artists with EIDOS' worldwide marketing and distribution capabilities." All of which means you're going to be hearing a lot more about ION Storm in the near future.

"EIDOS shares ION Storm's vision and offer us everything we are looking for in a publisher," said the equally pleased Romero. Which is heartening news indeed.

Competing publishers are no doubt spitting feathers about the whole situation, but they'll be able to keep up to date on ION Storm, like the rest of us, by pointing their Web browsers at <http://www.ionstorm.com>.

INTERACTIVE MAGIC SIGN ICI

Continuing their strategy to become the number one 3D Internet gaming company, Interactive Magic have merged with Interactive Creations Inc (ICI) to create I-Magic Online which will produce real-time computer games for play over the Internet.

ICI are best-known for their on-line flight sim *WarBirds* (voted 'on-line game of the year' in the US and currently gathering a respectable following in the UK), but the Dallas-based company also have a number of other on-line games in development, one of which – *Planetary Raiders* – has the capacity to allow thousands of players to compete via the Internet, providing smooth gameplay with only a 9600 baud modem requirement.

By this time next year, I-Magic Online hope to see six of their new real-time games up and running, plus Internet versions of a number of existing Interactive Magic titles. Should be a busy year, then.

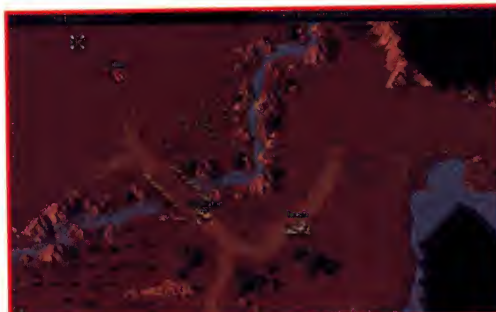
For more information check both <http://www.icigames.com> and <http://www.imagicgames.com>.



Out soon from Interactive Magic's on-line gaming division, *Planetary Raiders* is an open-ended space exploration game that will be played over the Internet.

This time you're on your own

Rumours of Westwood's Internet-only C&C variant have been circulating for quite some time, but we can now divulge the full gen



Players can wander around the playing environment and jump into vehicles (a bit like the way you could in *Z*) and blow things up.



The potential of *Sole Survivor* is enormous. You and your mates can log on and form units within the overall army. Excellente.

COMMAND & CONQUER: SOLE SURVIVOR IS being designed by Westwood to be played exclusively over the Internet. It won't have any single-player campaigns or scenarios; neither will you build or command an army, or mine Tiberium either. Instead the player will command a single unit – the only mission being to kill everyone else in the game.

Each individual player (there'll be a maximum of 50 per battlefield) will see their name above their respective unit, and opponents can hijack and take

over other vehicles as and when the opportunity arises. Westwood describe *Sole Survivor* as "total anarchy" and have no plans to tie this game into the C&C line, even though it uses C&C's recognisable graphics and AI technology.

Sole Survivor will no doubt attract a huge following once it's finished and on-line, and rest assured that PC Zone will be scrutinising a copy of the software as soon as we can get our grubby mitts on it. Look out for further announcements in the On-line section of the mag. **Z**

Top secret at MicroProse

The gaming grapevine is rumbling with rumours that Geoff Crammond is busy developing GP3 and there's whispers that a new *Trek* game using the *Unreal* engine is on the way

ALTHOUGH NOTHING HAS BEEN officially confirmed by publishers MicroProse,

it's believed that the sequel to the massive *Formula 1 Grand Prix 2* (one of the biggest selling PC games ever) is on the way and due for release early next year. Rumour has it that GP3 will feature a network option and possibly a new licence that will bring it bang up to date with last year's F1 season. There's also the possibility (gasp!) that Crammond will be adapting the code and models to accommodate some of the new regulations recently introduced by the FIA (the sport's governing body) as well as updating the tracks, teams and cars.

Fans of *Formula 1 Grand Prix 2* will be well aware how processor-intensive the game is, and it's thought that as well as introducing a multi-player option to compete with the forthcoming *F1* titles from Psygnosis, EIDOS and Papyrus's *IndyCar 2*, Crammond will be refining the existing code to take advantage of the graphical wizardry now offered by DirectX, MMX and a number of the dedicated 3D accelerator cards such as PowerVR and 3Dfx.



With *Star Trek: Generations* imminent (it's due for release at the end of March and looks very tasty – see page 41 for a full preview), we can confirm that the US-based

development team of MicroProse (formerly Spectrum HoloByte) are currently working on the game of the latest *Trek* film licence *Star Trek: First Contact*.

Unlike *Generations*, which uses a sprite-based 3D engine (similar to the one used for *System Shock*), *First Contact*

will use Epic's *Unreal* 3D

engine for total immersion in a true 3D environment.

Although no details have been released on the game itself, it's expected to be just as faithful to the blockbuster movie as *Generations* though more combat-orientated. As MicroProse hold the licence for the next four *Star Trek: TNG* games, we can expect it to feature voice-overs from the original cast, as well as all the correctly sampled sound effects, properties and clips from the film.

As yet no release date has been set for *First Contact*, although *Trek* fans can expect to be running around the new Enterprise clad in a vest and being pursued by the Borg before Christmas. **Z**

Oooh, we're all a-quiver

Pontefract's finest software development outfit announce a summer release for their spoof horror adventure

THERE'S A BIT IN THE QUIVERING PRESS RELEASE which says: "In *The Quivering* you take on the role of the central character guided by Uncle Franken-stamp (ie the Raven). Your quest is to

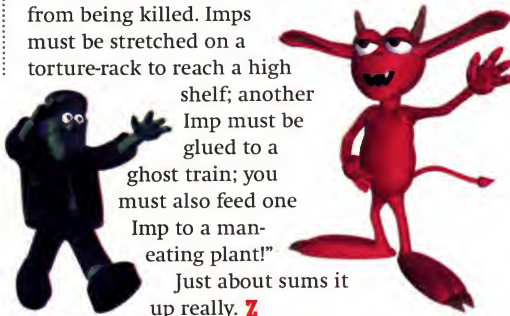


The family's off to Butimp's Holiday camp.

prevent BIG D and his evil forces from taking over the world. In order to complete your quest you must travel through the many strange

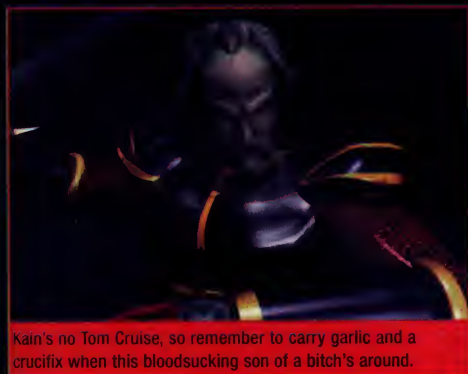
and differing worlds collecting Imps and various items, and solving puzzles. These items such as a Blow Torch can be given to an Imp you have collected to create a Blow Torch-wielding Imp who can then be used to cut through metal! (This proves most useful in the game.) Imps are used throughout the game to assist and prevent you from being killed. Imps

must be stretched on a torture-rack to reach a high shelf; another Imp must be glued to a ghost train; you must also feed one Imp to a man-eating plant!" Just about sums it up really. **Z**



Walk the Earth like Kain

Just released on the PlayStation, Activision's arcade horror game is now on target for the PC



Kain's no Tom Cruise, so remember to carry garlic and a crucifix when this bloodsucking son of a bitch's around.

VAMPIRE ADVENTURES HAVE YET TO SET THE gaming world alight, but Activision are hoping to remedy this with *Legacy Of Kain*, developed by Crystal Dynamics. While touring the hinterlands of Nosgoth, Kain is seized upon by brigands and beaten to within an inch of his life, only to awaken in the bowels of Hell whereby he foolishly strikes a deal with the Necromancer. Ravenous – and miles from the nearest Dixy Fried Chicken – Kain gorges himself on his original assailants, realising in the process that he has become a vampire, destined to dwell in a crypt and shy from the harsh rays of the sun; much like the home life of this contributor in fact (S'true – Ed). *Legacy Of Kain* should be released in April. **Z**



They Live

It's taken Beam Software nearly four years, but the PC version of their much-acclaimed SNES game *Shadowrun* is finally ready

ALIEN SARTH IS A SHADOWRUN-BASED adventure game that follows on from where Beam's original left off. Of course, this PC incarnation will be much bigger and far more involving than its predecessor, although it will maintain the dark and brooding atmosphere and the subtle undertone of violence of the *Shadowrun* setting. A spokesman for Beam commented:

"*Alien Earth* is the successor to *Shadowrun*, not a sequel, but a game which will build on the success of the *Shadowrun* model, with the enhancements and improved production techniques that are now available for PC products."

PC-owning fans of the original will rejoice at the news, as will the FASA-following role-playing types that only come out at night. Eek.

Riding abreast the 'alien invasion' revival wave, *Alien Earth* drops the player into a world of alien predators and leaves them to find a way out. Hi-tech weaponry versus magic follows, in the *Shadowrun* vein, all of which will be brought to life in a mixture of video and motion-captured animation.

A release date has yet to be confirmed, although Electronic Arts are likely to be the UK publishers. If you're after more information, just cast your Web browsers at <http://www.beam.co.au>. **Z**



A *Shadowrun* game on the PC is what we've been waiting for. Anyone remember the brilliant Super Nintendo original?

Dispatches

BT SLASH PRICES

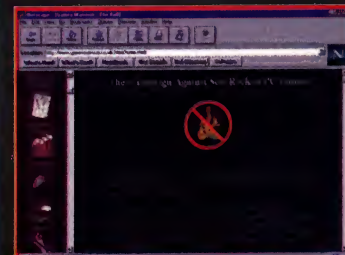
BT have announced 20 per cent off their flat monthly subscription fee, a 50 per cent discount on high-speed ISDN Internet access, plus the demise of their one-off registration charge of £20 as part of their newly-introduced BT Internet service.

"Although Internet growth has been phenomenal, most UK households are still not connected. Our new prices with no hidden charges will help bridge that gap," commented BT's Rupert Gavin. The new subscription fee for unlimited use enables customers to access the Internet as much as they want for only £10 per month, and for the cost of a local telephone call, too.

For more information call 0800 800001 or check out their Website at <http://www.bt.com>.

WHO WOULD LIVE IN A HOUSE LIKE THIS?

Net heads check out this "rather funky Website" (*Their words not ours* – Ed) called *The Games Mansion* at <http://www.gamesmansion.co.uk>. It's the only independent UK-based PC games e-zine that is created entirely by professional writers. And yes lads, we agree – it does stand up well against most of the other shite out there. In fact, it's the business.



Join the Campaign Against Soft Rock In PC Games at *The Games Mansion*.

STOP THE PRESSES!

Golden Image, distributors of the Twin Dual Joystick Selector, are offering huge savings for their customers in '97. Anyone buying an Alfa Twin with any other Golden Image peripheral will instantly receive a £10 deduction from the overall price.

Golden Image can be contacted on 0181 900 9291.

STOP PRESS: OFFICIAL RED ALERT ADD-ON PACK ANNOUNCED

As we to go press, news of an officially-endorsed *Red Alert* add-on pack has come from Virgin, the product's UK distributor.



Counterstrike, as it's to be called, will feature 16 new missions for solo play, over 100 new multi-player maps, freedom to play any mission in any order, nine new music tracks (expanding the *Red Alert* music library to 28 scores), and dangerous new nuclear technologies to play with.

New units unique to *Counterstrike* will include Tesla Tanks, self-defending Ore Trucks, the elite Soviet Super Soldiers, Soviet Wonder Dogs and Allied Superjets.

That's all Virgin will reveal at present, except that there will be three difficulty settings (like, wow), so keep your eyes peeled for more information.

HOTSHOTS

What's going on out there with the big games at the moment? We're here to show you what those darned hard-working developers have been up to...



MISSING IN ACTION (GT INTERACTIVE)

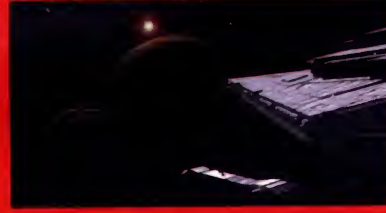
News of Simis' Vietnam-based combat sim *MIA* is now beginning to trickle through as a result of GT Interactive taking over the development of the product (it was previously to come out under the Warner Interactive banner).

This new multi-aircraft action sim will see the player embarking on factually correct missions which span the length and breadth of northern and southern Vietnam, with the game simultaneously paying homage to the best in 'Nam films.



STAR WARS: SUPREMACY (LUCASARTS)

LucasArts are remaining pretty tight-lipped as regards their forthcoming real-time strategy game *Star Wars: Supremacy* (formerly *Rebellion*), although they have allowed some shots to filter through. At the moment, all we can tell is that fans of *Star Wars*-styled menu screens will benefit because in-game battle shots have yet to be revealed. Providing the moons are in alignment next issue, we'll have a full preview for you.



COMANCHE 3 (NOVALOGIC)

"Are they in-game shots?"

someone asked as we peered at the latest selection from the *Comanche 3* camp. Yes, we can confirm that they are indeed a good example of what NovaLogic's new hi-res Voxel 2 technology is capable of. If you thought that the graphics in the previous two games were good... you're in for a bit of a shock.

What's more, if you look closely, you may also be able to see the impressive tracer bullet effect that they are so proud of. All this, and the game's not even finished yet...



COLD SHOTS

Yes, for one month only, here are a few of those games that were announced ages ago, but we're now sick of waiting for...

Battlecruiser 3000AD (Gametek)

How much time do you need to get it right, boys? Come on, let's have a look at it.

Dungoon Keeper (EA)

Is it really that bad you have to re-program it every single time?

Interstate 76 (Activision)

If you don't get it out soon, you'll have to call it *Interstate 86* and re-program all the haircuts and stuff.

Mean machines

Marcus Pullen reviews the most spooze-making modems for your PC – and we're not talking about stuff that's been on the shelf for a few years, oh no, only the latest new-born crop qualifies for these hallowed pages.

WE'LL START THE PROVERBIAL rolling with a look at the best modems pennies can buy. Modems allow you to access a whole host of services, the most obvious being the Internet and other on-line services such as CompuServe, CIX and AOL. Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs) give you access to hundreds of groups and areas for downloading files. As you know, the humble modem lets you play your favourite games with other people either head-to-head or on a BBS group. BT, however, have now come up with their own games network called Wireplay. Here you can chat with fellow gamers and then blow each others' brains out in cyberspace. Wireplay also has a games ladder for certain Wireplay-compatible titles, which is much more fun than playing in a squash ladder any day.

Of course, the best reason for buying a fast modem is in order to play *Quake* both on the Internet and head-to-head. The faster the modem the better the 'gib' action, but remember that when playing on the Internet it's the speed of your 'ping' that counts (see our *On-line* section for more information on 'pings'). The speed of a modem is usually measured by how many bits per second (bps) it can achieve: for instance, 28.8bps is a good speed for playing modem games and is more than adequate for getting on the Internet (in fact, that's as fast as you can go with most Internet service providers at the moment). If you've still got a 9.6bps, you'd better either stick to playing text adventures or save your dosh and get one of these beasts, because on-line games have now got hotter than a *Baywatch* babe under a blow torch. Phew!

Hayes Accura Ultimate Challenge



HAYES ARE OLD HANDS AT THE MODEM game, having developed the first PC modem way back in 1981. This year sees the launch of the fastest Accura range of modems, the 'Ultimate Challenge'. Aimed squarely at the games player, the range comes

devices really can work! Windows 3.x is, by nature, not quite so simple, but if you refer to the comprehensive on-line and printed manual you'll be all right.

All the cables you could possibly need are supplied and they're a decent length too – Hayes even supply a phone socket splitter in case, like me, you have only one



phoneline. The Accura also offers fax and voice-mail capabilities.

So if you've won a death-match, try faxing the losers a gloating message or, if you've been thoroughly arse-kicked, hide and set the voice-mail feature going. **Z**

bundled with three titles: *Actua Soccer 96* by Gremlin, DID's *EF2000* and *Warcraft*, produced by Interplay. Not only are these games modem-compatible, you can also use them with British Telecom's Wireplay games network (check out the BT disk covermounted on this month's issue).

After you've drooled over the software, put it to one side and look at the packaging of the modem itself. Don't you think it rather resembles a box of Grade A eggs? No? Perhaps I'm mistaken then.

The Accura 33.6 is an easy item to add to your PC. If you're running Windows 95, it's sooooo simple it should be made illegal. Hayes have included all the drivers for Windows 95 – all you have to do is stick the drivers disk into the floppy drive when Windows 95 asks for it. In fact, when I started my machine up, Windows 95 informed me that I had a Hayes Accura modem and to stick in the drivers disk – how nice, Plug 'n' Play

New for '97, Hayes' 33.6 Accura modem now comes with a trio of on-line games.

Score

93

No doubt about it, the ultimate collection of gear for the on-line gamer.

Price: £169 **Release Date:** Out now
Manufacturer: Hayes
Tel: 01252 775500

dan *The People's Choice*
Personal Computers

PC ZONE

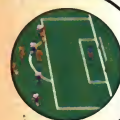
our price

Welcome to *PC Zone's* very own version of *The Chart Show*, sponsored by Our Price. Each month it'll feature the titles that we think will be flying off the shelves in the coming weeks, and it will also play host to exclusive news and competitions.

1

TOMB RAIDER(EIDOS Interactive)
£29.99

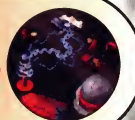
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USM2(Sierra)
£29.99

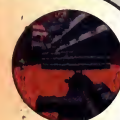
2

COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT

(Virgin) £29.99



7

DARK FORCES(Virgin)
£14.99

3

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2

(EIDOS Interactive) £19.99



8

SCREAMER 2(Virgin)
£22.99

4

TERMINATOR: SKYNET

(Virgin) £14.99



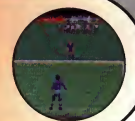
9

MONKEY ISLAND 1 & 2

(Virgin) £14.99



5

FIFA '97(Electronic Arts)
£29.99

10

QUAKE(GT Interactive)
£29.99

Hope you all enjoyed the super cool Kixx offer last month and are now chilling out in your ski hats! Our Price has more great games on offer at some seriously good prices this month and new to the Chart at No. 4 is *Terminator: Skynet*, a really happening *Doom*-style game, with you as the terminator.

This month also sees the launch of the long-awaited *MDK* (Murder Death Kill), which goes on sale from 27 March. From the people who brought you *Earthworm Jim*, this game is truly innovative and is a must-have addition to your collection – an ideal game for 'killing' time when you've nothing else to do!

To take part in this month's Our Price Top 10 prize giveaway, put pen to paper, answer the question below and send it in to: *PC Zone Our Price Competition* CPCZ74B, Bradley Pavillions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ, UK.

OUR PRICE QUESTION: Which chart game features motion-captured footballers?

Rules & Restrictions: All entries must be received by 27 March 1997. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final and the winners will be notified by post. All other usual restrictions apply, so don't even think about it, okay?

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE NEWS FROM OUR PRICE NEXT MONTH!

DISCLAIMER: The Top 10 printed is correct at the time of going to press but positions, titles and prices may vary throughout the month.

PREDICTION

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Will you back the villainous usurper and lead his evil hordes, or be loyal to the righteous prince and lead the armies of light?

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PC

Oi!

Stealey! What's your game?

Paul Mallinson talks to Interactive Magic's big US boss about, uh, anything that takes his fancy really.



THE SELF-STYLED 'WILD BILL' Stealey is a busy man. In fact he's so busy that I'm forced to conduct this interview at some god-forsaken hour in the morning ('Americans like their mornings' they say). I say: the man better be good. And he better be sharp. Because I won't be. This 7.45am interview slot will see to that.

As I read up on my 'Wild Bill' background information on the way to meet him, I recall that

famous scene from *Apocalypse Now*, where

Willard swots up on his Colonel Kurtz homework:

Will Stealey: Born August 22nd, Pennsylvania Military College, US Air Force Academy, superior leadership training, blah blah blah... The only thing he didn't have was a Purple Heart.

So here I am at the crack of dawn, being ushered into the i-Magic offices, into my own *Heart Of Darkness*, and I haven't even got my questions ready.

Good start

"We recently came over to your country and kicked Sheffield Wednesday and Aston Villa's butts!" proclaims Bill Stealey when I ask him about the football (soccer) team that he owns. "And they were better then than they are now."

Bill Stealey owns a professional, indoor soccer team called the Baltimore Spirit, and he's obviously very proud of them. He continues at pace:

"Outdoor soccer players aren't used to running. Outdoor soccer players run about 25 yards max, and then they get three minutes off. My guys have to run for one and a half minutes, at full speed, then come off the field for one and a half minutes. So it's on, off, on, off, on, off. And my guys were in much better shape than any in either of those teams."

It also seems that Bill has plans to introduce this six-a-side game to the UK. I ask him if he'd be so kind as to refer to the game by its genuine name of 'football', and not 'soccer', when he starts up this indoor league.

"We're gonna call it *Arena Soccer. Soccer.*" He spells out



(Left) Lt. Colonel Bill Stealey (retired) in full regalia.

(Above) Bill regularly flies his vintage T-28 Trojan at air shows around the world.

'soccer' with a capital 'K' into the microphone.

"How many points do you get for a goal?" I sense that 'Wild' Bill Stealey is up for a fight. One! Of course.

"Ahhhhh - old way, old way! Boring, boring!" I ask him what the hell he means by 'boring'?! And how the hell many points did he get for a goal in his game?!

"Well, is it a really good goal or an average goal?" The reply is instantaneous: 'A goal's a goal.'

"No it's not." I stand corrected and all becomes clear as Bill continues on:

"An average goal is two points. A really good goal is three points. You see, we have a three point line just like in basketball - you kick it outside 25 feet and it's an art."

Not listening anymore

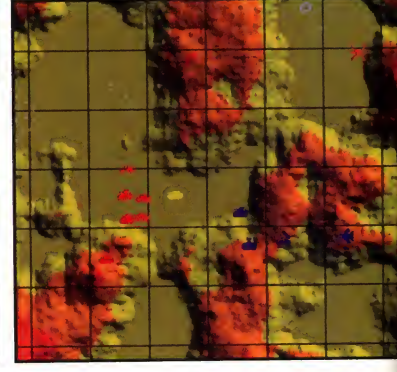
As I'm now starting to wake up in the midst of this argument about our beautiful game, I take the chance to change the subject to something a little more relevant. So, Bill, why have you just signed *WarBirds* when you've yet to convert the masses to the almost identical *Air Warrior*?

"If you're an *Air Warrior* fan you'll find *WarBirds* slightly more realistic to play. *Air Warrior II* is more for the masses. We like that and Kesmi [Air Warrior developer] likes that. *WarBirds* is also tougher. You gotta worry about torque. You gotta worry about real flight models. We are going to put an easy version of *WarBirds* out, but we're still behind *Air Warrior* in terms of

(Below left) The 'digital battlefield' concept is still of interest to Bill and his company.

(Below) Is the recently signed *WarBirds* a little too close to *Air Warrior* for comfort?

(Below right) iMIA2 Abrams is currently riding high in the 'Wild Bill' gaming top ten.





(Left) *WarBirds*: more accurate and more realistic than *Air Warrior*.

(Bottom left) *I-Magic* hope that *IF22* keeps them flying high.

(Below) 'Wild Bill' Stealey – two fighters short of a squadron.



accessibility. One day we'll end up competing head-to-head, but right now we really love 'em both!"

A speech so positively rousing I lose track of my questioning. The tried and tested 'tell me something I don't know about Interactive Magic' request evokes a strange reply:

"I have I-Magic boxer shorts on today." Bill sits snugly into his chair, we laugh, and I then ask for an immediate explanation.

"This morning I ran out of shorts and couldn't find any, so I borrowed a pair of my son's and they were I-Magic boxer shorts!"

Ho, ho – kinky! He could've been lying though: I never did pluck up the courage to ask him to drop his drawers and prove it.

Why simulation and strategy?

Later, I ask Bill what the fascination is with simulating real life. Why hadn't Interactive Magic branched out into other stuff like fantasy role-playing games, or adventure games? Bill shakes his head. Had I hit a nerve?

"That cost me MicroProse."

Oouch – I certainly had. For those of you who don't know, in a nutshell, Bill started MicroProse with Sid Meier, only to lose it in a drunken gambling game (yes, I am joking, but who really cares how he lost it?).

"*Darklands* and *Rex Nebular* cost me MicroProse. We weren't known for those types of games here, we couldn't take on Sierra, we spent twice the budget and they both came out late. So other than that it was a perfect ride." Bill ends on a positive note but I can tell already that RPG/adventure freaks are going to have to look elsewhere for their thrills.

Just how 'wild' are you Bill?

How did you end up with the 'Wild' tag of your name? Did you used to get into fights and stuff?

"Actually, I got beat up pretty bad in the ninth grade," says Bill. "I was bigger than the guys that did it, but I wasn't a

fighter and I went round school for four months with two of the biggest guys you've ever seen as 'bodyguards'. I was mortified. I was embarrassed. And to

add to that agony my mother hired somebody to beat me up every night. A dollar an hour, for two hours every

night for four months." Thankfully, Bill goes on to confirm that these beatings did take place in a boxing ring.

"They quit when I started to hit back. That started this whole issue – I'm calm, mild, I don't get into fights, but I defend myself very well." He continues: "Ten years ago, at a party in Maryland

when I was at MicroProse, this guy came towards me like he was gonna swing a punch, so I 'cold-cocked' him. Right there and

then. I thought I was in big trouble – there were press there and oh, what a night that was. The 'Wild Bill' thing came

partially because of that, but it really started when my tenth grade Lacrosse coach began rewarding my enthusiasm with cries of 'Well done Wild Bill!'. It's all about attitude. I

may not be better than you at anything, but I'll try longer and harder than you ever will. I'll look right through you and keep coming!"

A confrontational, typically American way of putting it. I consider challenging the man to a drinking contest, but think better of it, choosing instead to ask what Bill has to say to all those people who think Interactive Magic still have everything to prove.

"Wait!" he shouts. Bill stands to leave. As I said earlier, he's a busy guy and he's leaving me to finish the rest of my early morning in peace. Now wide awake, I demand more before he leaves.

"That's all I can say. We're out there doing it, and we're doing it every day. We'll keep making our games, and as long as we sell enough of them to make a profit – who cares?"

The people that bought *Destiny* may have something to say about that...

I'm surprised by Bill's final comment, but with an enthusiasm and sense of humour that shine through I conclude that he's not the 'big bad beast' that some people make him out to be. Hands are shaken and backs patted and 'Wild Bill' Stealey is gone – off wheeling and dealing in the name of his company. And it's only just turned eight-thirty. He must be keen. **Z**



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Terracide

When *Descent* came along, people were so impressed that they almost stopped playing *Doom*. When **Paul Presley** was taken behind the scenes of EIDOS' new 3D action game he started to erase *Quake* from his hard drive. But then he was crap at it anyway, so it doesn't really matter.

BY THE RIVERS of Babylon! were, I think I'm correct in saying, the words that first sprung to my lips. Now ordinarily, being in Godalming wouldn't usually elicit such a panegyric. But the reason was that this particular part of Godalming was housing the talented boys and girls of Simis and two of their number, James Brooksby,

Project Manager, and Simon Carless, one of the Lead Designers, were taking me through a demonstration of *Terracide*. Sometimes when you're given an assignment by the enigmatic figure known only as 'Ed', you're given a lot of information to go on. Screenshots, press releases and, if you're really lucky, semi-playable demos. Other times you have to 'go in cold' as we say in what we laughingly refer to as 'the business'. This was one such time. All I'd been told was that *Terracide* was an action-blasters and that it was coming from EIDOS (as everything seems to these days).

So when I first saw the game, with all its speed, smoothness, incredibly detailed texturing, amazingly accurate light-sourcing and multitude of

graphical effects, my brain could only summon forth the lyrics to old Boney M tunes and the question: "You're using a 3D accelerator card aren't you?"

And how!

As it turns out, Simis aren't just using a 3D accelerator card, they're positively exhausting one. When Microsoft first let the world know about the next step in their plans to take over the computerised world by devising a standardising graphics card programming interface called Direct3D, Simis were one of the first development teams to get their hands on the development kit version (similar to the way the Sony PlayStation was first handed out in kit form to various software teams so that production could begin on software while the hardware was still being worked on). As a result, *Terracide* has just about every kind of 3D effect you could ask for and in return is being used by Microsoft to show off what Direct3D is capable of. »

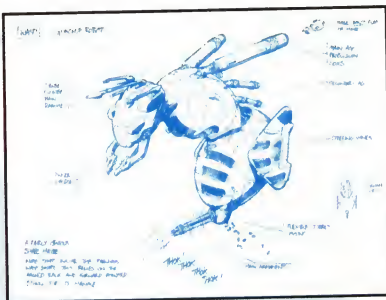
(Left) Alpha blending in action. Eventually all you'll see are sparks from the engine.

(Below left) Attack Of The Killer Pentium Tower PCs!

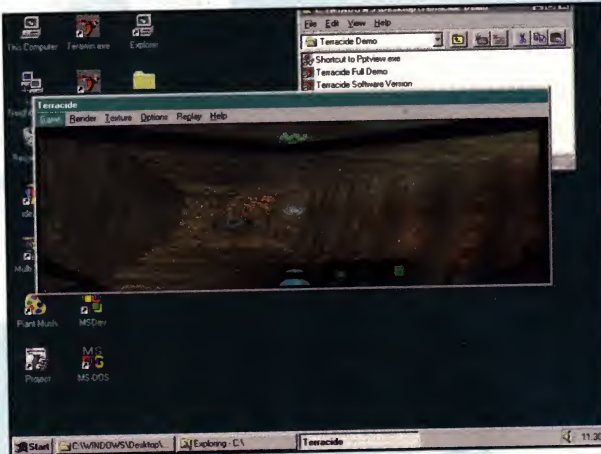
(Below) Erm, weren't you in Disney's *The Black Hole*? Alongside that flying Dusty Bin?



IN PRODUCTION



BEHIND THE SCENES



(Above) They're tantamount to showing off now, but Brooksby insisted on showing me that *Terracide* works so smoothly under Windows 95 that you can resize the game window to any size you fancy and it will still run just as smoothly. Widescreen anyone?

(Left) The early artwork shows how much detail Simis wanted to put into the game's graphics. The surprising thing is that other than a slightly more angular feel to them, the designs have been stuck to almost perfectly.

What higher praise could you want (except a *PC Zone* Classic award, obviously)?

Unlike some games that try to bombard you with flashy visuals but precious little else, *Terracide* is more than just a fancy cv for the graphic artists. The visual effects actually make up most of the elements of the game. Different levels of fogging are used to create radiation fields and water-based sections in which your craft bobs, weaves and decomposes as it fights its way onwards. Translucency effects allow you to have windows and water surfaces that slightly distort your view. Reflection-mapping gives each of the enemy robots a really solid and metallic feel and because each object,



be it robot, spaceship, bullet, missile, power-up or explosion, is fully animated polygon by polygon, everything has such a realistic look to it that you'd almost think you were watching a pre-rendered animation sequence while busy playing. For example, pick an external view of your fighter, select a particular weapon and you'll see it being loaded onto the front of your hull. Which is handy during networked games, but I'll come to that later.

One of the best effects though, as well as being a really cool gameplay feature, comes from using a procedure called alpha-blending. One of the weapons you can pick up is called an invisibility gun. No prizes for guessing what it does, but when James and Simon showed it to me in operation my tongue nearly jumped

out of my mouth and made a permanent home on their monitor. The fading in and out of invisibility is so smooth you could use it for malt whisky. It's so smooth...



From Alpha Centauri with love

In one of those bizarre 'hands across the world' type deals, the main introductory sequence for *Terracide* is being animated in Russia by a graphics team called Creat. Basically, the story is your typical plucky-humans-fighting-against-alien-invaders deal, the only twist being that these particular invaders were actually humans that decided to bugger off centuries before to colonise other planets in the galaxy. Finding life just a teensy bit harder than living in Teeside, said colonists eventually decided that decades of rough living standards, gradually mutating body parts and an ever-dwindling supply of Mountain Dew was more than they could possibly handle and so they've returned. Returned to take back the planet that last sent them a Christmas card over 200 years ago. And they don't much care for the current inhabitants.

There was scant information available about the Russian animation team and the only indication we have about the quality of their work is in the form of these stills taken from the opening sequence that are accompanying this panel. However, always on the quest to bring you as much information as we possibly can, this reporter did a little digging. A quick search on the Weird World Web told me that there was a Russian computer animation firm called Creat who have done various promos, animations and logos for several Russian television programs.

In an even weirder coincidence (that should freak out even the most paranoid of Mulder-wannabes), the storyline was initially co-authored by none other than ex-editor of *PC Zone* magazine, Laurence Scotford. Eee, it's a small world.



Bet you just can't wait to pilot this craft – I know I can't!



What? It looks friendly enough, doesn't it?



Our hero. It's no wonder aliens are so hostile towards us, is it?



Take two guns into the shower? Not me

No, I like to use three. One of *Terracide*'s most unique gameplay features is that unlike most first-person action games, as you progress through the levels you can pick up more and more weapons to point at people and go bang. "Hang on," you're saying, "that's just like most first-person action games, you nonce." Perhaps I didn't explain clearly enough. What I mean is that you can pick up and use at the same time more and more weapons. Up to three at once in fact. And they can all be different.

Any port in a firestorm

One of the gameplay features that I really rather liked was the fact that you usually start each mission *outside* the enemy ship you're about to infiltrate. Here *Terracide* takes on a kind of X-Wing-style space combat mantle, seeing you fighting your way past various enemy fighters to get to the docking port on the main craft.

Apart from giving you the chance to swan about outside each mothership, checking out the detailed graphics, going "Gadzooks!" at the sheer size of the beasts and pretending you're actually Luke Skywalker making a 'run' on the Death Star (although personally I'd rather be Wedge - aka TV's Dennis Lawson. Ever noticed how he was the only one of the 'extras' to survive through all three films and how his X-Wing always seemed to suffer a slight engine failure at a convenient moment meaning he had to bugger off back home and let the others get blown to shreds by Darth and Co? Now there was a fella who knew the meaning of survival), you also get the chance to enter each ship by different docking ports. Sometimes you even get to fly in and out of different ports within each level, depending on whether you find one route to your objective particularly tricky.

Once inside you'll find that each ship's layout matches the shape of its exterior, so taking some time to recon outside the craft before you enter can even be useful for mapping purposes. Also, once you've entered a docking port, you'll occasionally fly past large windows and the like, giving you a chance to see what's going on outside. Unfortunately, this is one of those "You're The Only Man Who Can Stop Them" affairs, so you won't get to see friendly pilots putting up a brave but ultimately futile effort at resistance. You never know, maybe for a sequel, eh Simis?



So where's the front door on this thing?



Bugger. Perhaps I should have gone round the back instead.

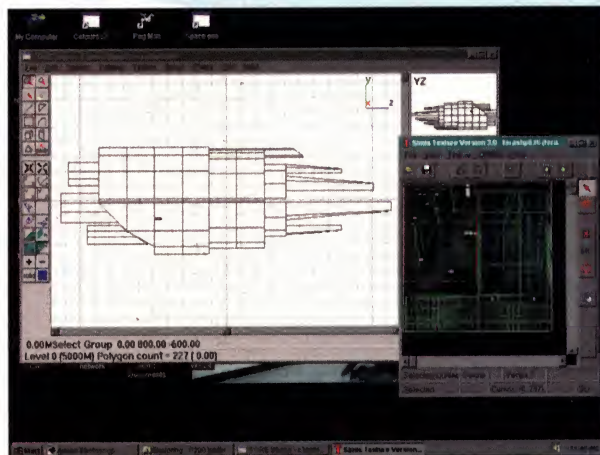


Cool! Cool graphics!

Your ship has three front weapon ports, and into them you can slot photon lasers, bombs, missiles (that you can guide after launching via an onboard camera - just think of Desert Storm and those bombs that flew down Saddam's chimney), pellet guns (which are actually more like rapid-fire sub-machine guns) and, rather amusingly, bouncing bombs. Well, they're amusing in that you can fire them singularly, several at a time or as an entire spread that bounce off down the corridors, around corners and straight up the jackies of an enemy robot. Which as we all know is great fun.

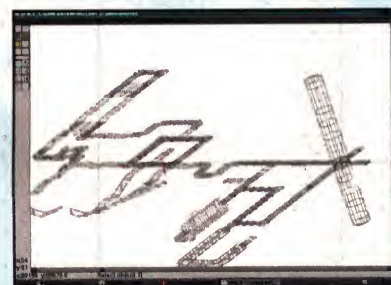
Kill your friends, sleep with your enemies

As excellent a game as *Quake* was, it really only came alive when people started causing their workmates to trip over networking cables strung between each other's machines. The people at Simis are no fools when it comes to spotting trends, and consequently *Terracide* has more networking options than you can shake an IPX protocol at. Up to 16 people can play at one time (but sadly there's no news of any Internet options as yet), either in straight deathmatch modes or in a two-to-five team Capture The Flag game.



(Above) Those of you that remember *Flight Sim Toolkit* might find Simis' 3D CAD software familiar. You can rest assured that this version is much enhanced.

(Right) Just one of the many, many levels. So much for pen and paper maps.



One particularly nice aspect of this section is that when you join a game it doesn't just throw you straight in at the deep end. Players all start in a sort of communal 'safe zone' where the weapons are deactivated and teams can discuss tactics or bait their opponents with witty insults.

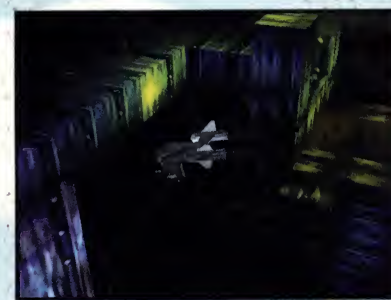
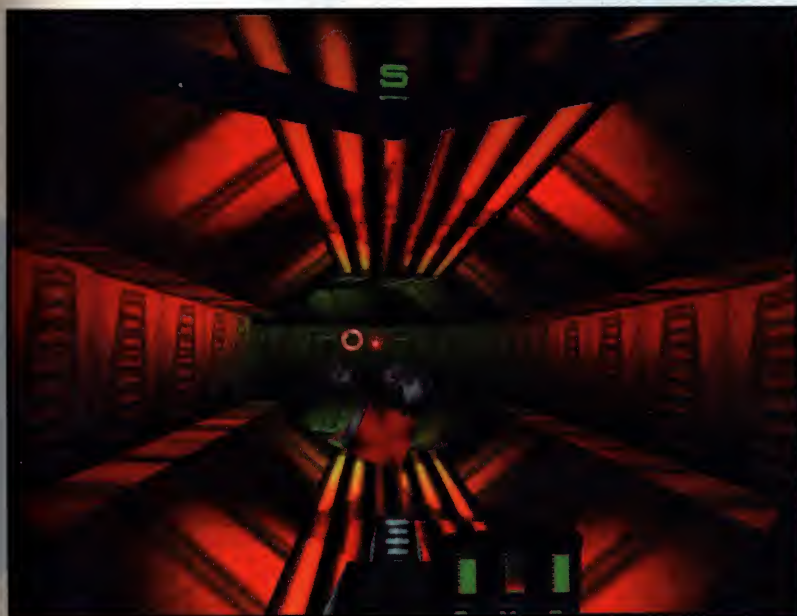
Terracide is one of those games that just gets more and more exciting the more you think about it. At the time of writing, Simis have promised EIDOS that it will all be ready by March. The only trouble is that I want it now, so I've decided to organise a little moonlight raid on Simis' HQ to try and get my hands on an advanced copy. If you want to join me then get in touch via PC Zone's normal address and we'll organise the incursion together. I'm well prepared, but you'd better bring your own balaclava. **Z**

Product details

Developer: Simis
Publisher: EIDOS Interactive
Telephone: 0181 780 2222
Format: CD-ROM
Release date: March/April

(Left) The ambient lighting effects allow Simis to individually bathe each different section of the corridor in different colours.

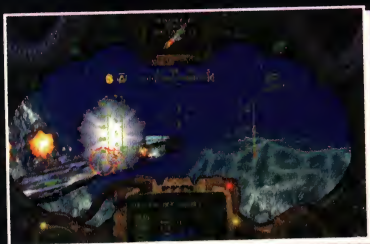
(Right) Into the unknown. I mean, look at the detail in that background. And that moves smoother than most Polish animated films that does. Cor.



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PC Zone
92%

"The in game graphics have to be seen to be believed".

PC Review
8 out of 10

"The atmosphere of Blade Runner and the action of Elite underpin this top-drawer blaster".

PC Format
86%

"Do we recommend it? Of course we bloody do!"

PC Power
94%

"The graphics are incredible, and the gameplay is second to none".

PC Home
92%

"This is a great game".

CGW
4 out of 5

"Archimedean Dynasty is the badgers nadgers".

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Star Trek: IN PRODUCTION Generations

The film might have seemed a bit plop to everyone but die-hard Trekkies, but thankfully the game of the film looks like being another classic. **Jeremy Wells** went off to Spectrum HoloByte's HQ in Alameda, California, to see just how they managed to turn a tepid script into a red-hot PC game.

SPECCY'S LAST TREK GAME WAS rather excellent, giving everything TNG fans the globe over ever wanted. A decent point-and-click adventure mixed with space combat strategy bits and all the official Trekkiness you could want: realistic characters, original voice-overs and sound effects and a very stable and accurate Trekkie universe. It was fab. Okay, the format wasn't exactly original, the combat wasn't what you'd call exceptional and it would have been kinda cool if you got to control Picard all the time (instead of messing around with all the four crew members at once) but it was still a fantastic game.

Star Trek: TNG - A Final Unity wasn't actually based on a specific movie plot, but took in a few things from some of the TV series. *Star Trek: Generations* (as you've probably deduced) on the other hand is based on the film. Now, personally I thought the film wasn't particularly good. In fact I thought it was probably the worst *Star Trek* film ever made. Thankfully, the

(Right) "I've got more hair than you!"
"I know, but you wear a hair piece."

(Below Right) Although it's sprite-based, the 3D engine allows for very detailed characters.



Not Next Gen Game Engine

Generations is very different from the first TNG game. For starters, the development team have dropped the tried and tested point-and-click style approach in favour of a first-person 3D perspective view that's just a bit akin to the classic *System Shock*. It's not *Quake* (all the characters are sprites), but it's still very impressive nevertheless because of the detailing and amount of different textures used throughout. Developer Simon Finch explains: "We decided to go with sprites because it allowed us to be more visually creative. *Generations* isn't about running around blasting things - it's not meant to be *Quake*. You can play it that way if you want to, but you won't get very far - that's not what *Star Trek* is all about. We wanted to create rich and diverse environments that the player could explore and interact with. If we'd looked at using polygons to do this, it would just be too big, or not detailed enough."

In fact detail is a bit of a buzz word at Spectrum. Not only have they recorded another zillion lines of dialogue for the new game, spoken by the original cast, but they've raided Paramount's files for anything and

game doesn't follow the plot of the film religiously, but expands on the general themes and ideas, taking in the characters, most of the scenarios and adding to them. At the very beginning these are introduced by way of a pretty lengthy (though very nicely done) intro sequence that sets the scene. An El-Aurian, Soran (played by Malcolm McDowell) is desperately trying to return to a dimension called the Nexus (a kind of ethereal Heaven). To get there he must somehow guide the gateway to his location on a planet where he can hop on board and be transported to ecstasy. Because he's essentially an evil nutter (you wouldn't expect McDowell to play anything else now, would you?), Soran is quite prepared to do absolutely anything to guide the ribbon to receive him, which means that he'll happily hop about the solar system blowing up stars (using probes containing tri-lithium) with complete gay abandon until he's on his way, with absolutely no thought for the billions of people who'll die as a result of his intergalactic pyrotechnics. Your task, as *Star Fleet* goody-goody, is to stop him at all costs.

(Below) The ten different worlds are massive as well as incredibly detailed.



Product details

Developer: Spectrum HoloByte

Publisher: MicroProse

Telephone: 01454 893893

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: April 97



« everything to do with *Star Trek: TNG*. The results should have Trekkers shivering in anticipation.

"We now know more about *Star Trek* than Paramount," enthuses Simon. "We've had access to all of their stuff – all the blueprints of the space ships, detailed documents on all the worlds featured in the film, all the characters. Basically, it's as accurate and faithful to the TV show and the film as you can get. Players will be able to beam down onto a Romulan ship and everything they see will be just as it should be within the *Star Trek: TNG* universe. All the equipment you can pick up and use will be genuine – players will be

able to completely immerse themselves in the *Star Trek* universe and see for themselves just what it's like."

FMV definitely not VFM

Although *Generations* uses clips from the film, the team have made the effort to keep the FMV to an absolute minimum in an attempt to keep the game pacy. In total, there's about 20 minutes, and that includes a rather lengthy intro piece to set the scene in case you haven't seen the movie (like duh?). They've even re-done some of the sequences and music used in the film themselves in an attempt to improve on them, but they've kept them short so they don't intrude.

Obviously, this is a very important licence and the temptation to use as much FMV as you can get away with is difficult to resist, so just how valuable is the licence and how important is FMV in games? "Personally," remarks Simon, "I couldn't even sit through the intro of *Wing IV*. FMV, when used like that, is a waste of time and money."

"*Generations* was developed within a seven figure budget – not eight figure –



(Left) The space combat has improved dramatically, and it's now much easier to grasp.

(Below left) Some missions will require stealth, others a twitchy trigger finger.

we're not Origin. And you can quote me on that!" chips in Marketing Manager Steve Haney.

"We're not interested in making interactive movies here," reaffirms Simon. "What we want to do is make the *Star Trek* universe accessible to the fans by re-creating the *Trek* universe in as much detail as possible. You can't do that with loads of FMV. Hopefully, we've used the licence as best we can. Paramount are certainly very happy with what we've done. Hopefully, all those people who enjoy *Star Trek* will be too." **Z**



Three games in one (innit?)

Generations isn't just running around the place in a tight jumper touching your chest. No sir, it's three games in one...

1. STELLAR CARTOGRAPHY



The basic hub of the game, this is where you (as Picard) attempt to track down Soran and decide whether to embark on another away mission or engage in a little intergalactic fisticuffs. It's based on the interactive planetarium featured (for the first time) in the film. Players can scan any of the ten different solar systems and then all of the stars, planets and starships within these systems to find out exactly where and what Soran is up to.

2. AWAY MISSIONS



The meat and veg (as it were) of the game. Players get to explore ten worlds in glorious hi-res detail as various members of the crew (each mission is assigned to the crew member most suited in terms of skills – ie Worf is beamed down onto a planet that

might be perceived as hostile, or one inhabited by Klingons). There are 16 missions in all, some are combative, others are undercover where combat will not solve the mission. Some of the missions contain puzzle elements, and nearly all will require the player to locate and retrieve objects and information and complete certain tasks, such as adjusting flux inhibitors and re-routing power matrix conduits. Later on, you even get to play Kirk. And if you fail a mission, it's still possible to complete the game. Duh? Although most of the worlds are inhabited by NPCs, you can't really interact with them. "This would just slow the game down," argues Mr Finch, "and we want to keep it pacy."

3. SPACE COMBAT



This was a bit crap in *A Final Unity*, and has been re-worked. All space battles now take place in 640x480 3D graphics and in 16-bit colour. The multiple screens in *Unity*'s combat sections have been combined into one, so it's generally less

confusing this time round (you don't have to jump between weapons, control and engineering any more as you try to manage your ship's systems). You can play this section arcade-style with a joystick, but it's supposed to capture all the tension and atmosphere of the finest *Trek* battles. Consequently, the ships are rather slow and not very manoeuvrable, so you've got to concentrate on finding an enemy ship's weak spot if you want to blast it into smithereens.

THE FIGHT IS ONLY HALF THE BATTLE



So it's time to think on your feet. When you've got five opponents on your tail at the same time, you've got to move at the speed of thought to survive. That's when it sinks in. There are five worlds ahead of you, fifteen hundred locations between them, full of hostile alien warriors hellbent on your destruction.

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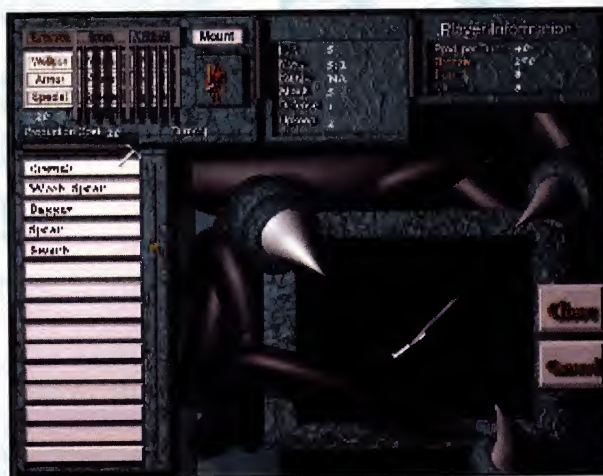


Cave Wars

"I'm thinking of setting up an office there," said Paul Presley, returning from his fourth trip to see an EIDOS game in as many hours. We disregarded such a threat and placated him with a bus pass instead.

THE LATEST GAME TO COME screaming from Putney-based software house EIDOS (who are also about to bring us *Deathtrap Dungeon* and *Terracide*, which is pre-viewed on page 37) into my grubby little hands is *Cave Wars*, a turn-based resource management affair set in one of those semi-mythological history books that insist we once possessed the power of wizardry.

Actually, for a change Earth isn't the venue, but a strange land called Ibido. Below the surface of the planet, eight races battle for supremacy. Above the planet everything is run by the Conservative Party (The press release actually says, "An evil and twisted race of immense power..." Yeah, I see your point - Ed). The idea is that first you choose a race, then beat the cajones out of all the others, and finally take to the surface and knock out the big boys. I think it's called progressive evolution. Or zany, knockabout fun. I can never remember which.



(Above right) Blimey, a strategy game with dark bits to explore. Whatever next?

(Above) Resource management blues.

(Below) An unusually exciting research screen.

(Bottom) Yes of course you get to kill things, stupid.



Back to basics

Cast your mind back to pre-*Command & Conquer* days. Eerie, isn't it? Look over there, people are still playing *Doom*! How quaint. Anyway, before *C&C* there was a game called *Dune II*. Similar in style, top-down perspective, resource-management, unfolding maps. A pretty smart if somewhat under-appreciated game. However, ever since *C&C* breathed new life into the genre, we've seen a gamut of like-minded titles, all insisting that they do things better and faster and smarter and prettier.

Which is why it's refreshing to hear someone say, "Sod that for a game of artificially intelligent soldiers. Let's get the basics right and worry about frills later." *Cave Wars* owes more to *Dune II* than *Command & Conquer*, and as a result could be just the thing to put an end to all those complaints about troops that behave like cabbages, despite your having given them a step by step list of instructions with all the big words spelt phonetically.

You are in control of everything. Absolutely everything, meaning that you have to be constantly aware of every unit's position, every miner's current work rate, every enemy troop. If you screw up and lose the game, it's no good yanking the CD out of your PC, it's your fault, not the computer's.



Product details

Developer: Avalon Hill

Publisher: EIDOS

Telephone: 0181 780 2222

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: March

Cave Wars starts you out in the early days of technology. Sticks and stones are what hurt your bones. As you explore the area around your home city, you need to find minerals to excavate and turn into resources, food to feed your ever-expanding populace and more cities to conquer. Uniquely, each of your units, be they soldier, miner or whatever, has a field of influence around him, meaning that you own whatever territory you are close to. You can't just discover a patch of tasty edibles, claim it in the name of the king and then wander off. If you want it, you gotta protect it.

Sounds basic to me

Avalon Hill have a distinct strategy in mind when it comes to their approach to games. Outside of the computer world, they are best-known for producing some horrifically complex table-top wargames (the kind with rule books that fill out volumes upon volumes). Hence they know their market. They're not trying to produce a *Command & Conquer* rival - far from it. Instead they want to worry about getting the strategic content of their games right. Just as an adventure game needs to concentrate on a good story rather than its graphics, so a strategy game needs to present you with a decent challenge rather than a nice way of presenting each mission. *Cave Wars* is hoping to have hardcore strategy gamers jumping with excitement come March. And by the looks of it, it's on course to do just that. **Z**



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Formula 1



"It's called *Formula 1*. What kinda game d'you think it is, for cryin' out loud? Ya need an introduction, ya need a new brain," said Patrick McCarthy – reasonably enough. For him.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF DRIVING games being previewed this month, but perhaps the most eagerly-awaited is Psygnosis' PC conversion of *Formula 1*, which sold approximately five billion copies on the PlayStation and looked nicer than... er... a very big, very well-cooked meal looks to a hungry person. (How apt. How appropriate to the game in question – A Reader.) Alright, you think of something, then. I'm in a hurry.

On the PSX, it looked very good indeed – personally I thought it made *F1GP2* look a little flat. But then I'm colour-blind: it may look infinitely worse for all I know. Anyway, it's going to look even better on the PC, because it's coming out with a 3Dfx native version and a Direct 3D version on the same CD. And as you'll see from the screenshots (providing nothing horrible has happened at the printers), it looks very nice indeed.



Make it easy on yourself

Basically, the game's aimed at people who like the idea of launching into an F1 season, but can't be arsed with all the crap that goes with it: studying telemetry, setting up cars to within an Angstrom unit of accuracy, wearing silly tight overalls, shagging tall blonde women with foreign-sounding names in caravans... Instead, you get all the fast driving without the tiresome bits. There are two basic driving modes, both with individual difficulty settings: Grand Prix is harder and more realistic, with practice and qualifying sessions, pit stops, collision damage and tyre wear, whereas Arcade takes an old-fashioned bumper-cars, finish-in-the-points-to-get-to-the-next-round approach.



(Left) The track detail is just awesome – here's Monaco.

(Right) The code is essentially the same as the PlayStation version, so don't expect any improvement in driver AI. But, hey – this is an arcade racer and not a nuts and bolts sim – it's supposed to be fun!

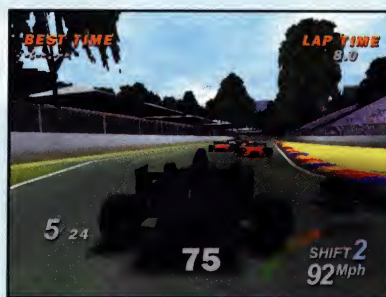


Bizarre Creations, the developers, got the licence to produce a *Formula 1* game based on the 1995 season, which was licensed by FOCA to Fuji Television. In terms of gameplay, this means that you get exactly the same game as the PlayStation version: Schumacher's still at Benetton, and for those of you who liked to sit around during Grand Prix wearing fake moustaches and wrapped in a Union Jack, Nigel Mansell is available as one of the four McLaren drivers. It also means, at the default settings, that there are 17 circuits, including Adelaide (F1's last visit before they banned it) which you'll race in the order they appeared that season. But if you refuse to race in Adelaide in protest at their outrageously pro-eco decision, you've always hated the Hungaroring, or have only ever wanted to race at Monaco, you can customise a season as much as you want.



(Above) Car detail is amazingly accurate thanks in part to the official licence.





(Above) Arcade mode with all the help features switched on and it's up there with *Ridge Racer* for playability.

(Left) On Grand Prix mode the game's nigh impossible – ie realistic.



« Arcade... er, accuracy

Although the game takes a more action-orientated approach than *F1GP2*, everything has still been thoroughly researched. The tracks are spot-on, right down to the advertising hoardings, having been produced from official surveyors' maps which give track elevation, widths, and even locations of lavatories with doors missing for voyeuristic drivers. All the surrounding buildings have been added too, from careful study of the maps and more hours of live video footage than you'd really want to sit through. And yes, there are floaty things in the harbour at Monaco. Well, that's what what you get when the doors on your toilets are hanging off.

The car's the star

The cars are also accurately modelled, using team diagrams, photographs and video footage as reference material, and they too are accurately spattered with advertising – hardly surprising



(Below) You'll need a ninja Pentium to run the game full-on – but that's the norm these days isn't it?

really, given that it's their primary purpose – with everything except cigarette sponsors right where you'd expect it to be.

And although the more arcade-orientated approach means you won't be able to pore over pages and pages of mind-numbing telemetry, pretending you know what it means, all that black-magicky mumbo-jumbo has been interpreted for the game so that lap and race times, braking distances and so on are all as accurate as possible. At the easiest Grand Prix level, and in arcade mode, you may be able to beat the real-life track records by chucking the car about, cutting the odd chicane and generally being Cheaty McCheat, but at the harder settings times of the other drivers are faster, more accurate, and very difficult to match. And any jumping across chicanes will see you flying through the air toward the nearest stretch of Armco. Remember to duck.

Commentary is provided by Murray Walker, but if you just can't stand the man, you can always opt to listen to the German commentary by Jochen Mass, French commentary by Philippe "Ee-Aye" Alliot, or show off your linguistic talent with a choice of Spanish or Italian. Or you could just switch it off. The game's not finished yet, but the versions we've seen running look pretty darned cool so far. We'll give you a full review when it's finished. (We're like that.) **Z**



Product details

Developer: Bizarre Creations
Publisher: Psygnosis
Telephone: 0151 282 3000
Format: CD-ROM
Release date: April

Bizarre interview

We spoke to *F1* developers Bizarre Creations and asked them to tell us more about the game.

PC Zone: *F1* was incredibly successful on the PSX, but it didn't have any real competition. Who will it appeal to on the PC, which already has *F1GP2*?

Bizarre: Two types of people, hopefully. Casual sim fans and *F1* fans will enjoy being able to race in Grand Prix mode with a simple car set-up, race strategy, full practice and qualifying sessions, tyre and re-fuelling stops, as well as plenty of configurable options – collision damage, gear-changes, tyre wear etc. And those who just want pick-up-and-play action will be able to use the Arcade mode, which is more like a coin-op, where you have to finish in the points to get to the next circuit.

PCZ: What are the main differences between the games?

Bizarre: They're different games. *F1GP2* is an out-and-out sim, where set-up, strategy and deep thinking are essential before you play. *Formula 1* concentrates far less on set-up and more on racing.

PCZ: How do the PC version's graphics compare to the PlayStation's?

Bizarre: We're now running at 640x480 resolution without appreciable speed loss, with a similar textured polygon throughput to the PlayStation. Also, extra image quality is obtained from filtered textures and perspective correction for increased realism. We've added more shading and lighting to the cars – the PSX wouldn't be able to produce highlights without superimposing more textured polygons. And there's full Gouraud shading on the worlds, which would have dropped the polygon rate on the PlayStation. We've also been able to add niceties such as a perspective sky plane. Both the 3Dfx and D3D versions are superior to the PSX version.

PCZ: Why is there no plain Win95, un-accelerated version of *Formula 1*?

Bizarre: In our opinion, mid-range PCs couldn't handle the levels of polygon detail apparent in the PSX version of *F1*, which has 60,000 to 90,000 polygons per circuit. The most impressive PC engines, like *Quake*, rely on handling fewer polygons, enhanced with texture effects. We would have to do extensive remodelling, which is time-intensive and ultimately reduces the quality of the product.

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Axelerator

We thought we'd give *Axelerator* to Patrick McCarthy to have a look at. Because he can't spell either.



(Left) Front-mounted machinegun fires oranges, shock, horror!

(Right) I think I was meant to go left...



Stuff to shoot

These are the things you can use to shoot at other people:

NORMAL MACHINEGUN

If any machinegun could be said to be a normal thing to have, then this would be it. Useful for shooting bullets at people, one after another, very quickly.

EMP ROCKETS

Rockets which turn their victim into a European Member of Parliament. Either that or they disable the electric system of the car they hit for 20 seconds. It must be like driving a Lada/Skoda/Yugo/Trabant. (Delete as appropriate to form anti-Eastern European car of your choice joke.)

RAKETEN

Heat-seeking rockets, which don't do anything particularly sophisticated – except follow opponents' cars to the ends of the earth if necessary and blow the shit out of anything they hit.

AUTOMOBILE-BASED VIOLENCE HAS been in the news rather a lot of late, so it's perhaps in dubious taste to have a racing game that deals in it. Then again, *Axelerator* has nothing to do with knifing somebody in the heart because they wouldn't let you overtake them in your really fast car, or battering them to death with a ten pound bag of frozen kippers because you let them pull in front of you at a queue and they didn't say thank you. So it's probably alright. And who cares about good taste anyway?

Lack of flipper-orientated action shock

It's from 21st Century. But, casting aside the tradition of generations, it has nothing to do with pinball games. This is a shock to the system that could only be surpassed by *Brookside* doing an episode containing no irritating Scouse



(Below left) Go on my son... you could get a bus through there!



characters. Ignoring shouts from the back for a tilt function, they've gone instead for one of those drive like billy-o, shoot-the-shit-out-of-anything-that-gets-in-your-way, sort of things. There are 24 different tracks to choose from, located more or less all over the world, with widely varying terrain. One even has a Matchbox Superfast-style loop-the-loop section. (Except the track isn't bright yellow.)

There are all sorts of interesting things you can buy to help you lighten the traffic on our roads. Some of them are less helpful than others. In the less helpful category, for example, there's a furry tail to hang on your aerial. Apparently this is still popular in Germany, although it went out of fashion in England in about 1467. (Then again, that's true of most things... like really tight black trousers with white



socks and toe-length slip-on loafers, for example.) You can also buy a Pez dispenser, which is... well, alright, it's not useful, but it's more acceptable. And then there's all the very useful (ie highly destructive) stuff that most people would give an arm and a leg to use against the average sales rep on the motorway: machineguns to riddle the back of their Mondeo, magnetic mines to attach to their shiny suits, and heat-seeking missiles to zoom in on their red-hot mobile phones. You can see the full list elsewhere on these pages. (By the way, the version we had was still in German, if you're wondering about some of the names.)

There's the traditional arrangement for a game of this type: do well in the races, and you win prize money which,



instead of using to get out of the whole thing and take up TV sitcom production, you use to buy better cars and weapons, to do better in the harder races, to win more money, to spend on a better car... Somebody ought to point out to the

drivers that all they're engaged in is a more fast-moving version of the old factory shop system, without the coal dust. Oh,

there are three different cars, by the way – and they're all big American buggers: Chevrolets, Mustangs and Hellcats, to be specific.

If they get it right, it could turn out to be a bit of a laugh, turning the average race into a sort of cross between the Wacky Races, a Love Bug film and Apocalypse Now. If they get it wrong, of course, it won't. We'll know soon enough. Try to be patient. Z



(Right) Caught drinking and driving! Don't do it at home kids.

(Left) Either there's a loop-the-loop in front of me, or I'm going loopy.



Product details

Developer: Magic Bytes

Publisher: 21st Century

Telephone: 0123 851852

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: March

Stuff to drop

Stuff that is highly amusing to leave lying on the track. Especially if you're particularly unsporting and leave it at the entrance to the pit lanes.

NAGEL-WERFEN

Drop these on the track and people behind you get punctured tyres. But only if you shout their name with your best Dick Dastardly voice. (Go on, try it...)

HAFTMINEN

Magnetic mines that count down after you drop them. Quite how they work is beyond me. I wish I hadn't had so much to drink when I took these notes.

BLEIKUGEL

Drop these on the track, and people fall about all over the place. No, not tequila slammers – ball bearings.

ÖL-WERFEN

Small bottles of extra-virgin olive oil which you can use to (a) cook some really nice tapas on the bonnet and (b) spread on the track to make your rivals skid hopelessly out of control, across the road and into the front window of the PDSA's special 'living kittens' exhibition.

(Far left) Just why that sign is there, I don't know.

(Left) What's going on here then?

(Below left) Under all circumstances you must never ascend the Mayan temple. NEVER!

(Below) The road's not always flat. Here it's tilting a little, as you can see for yourself.

Weird stuff

Stuff that doesn't fall into either of the other two categories.

NEUTROBOOSTER

A vacuum cleaner thing, that sort of sucks you onto the track. So that you stick to the track a bit better. Without one... you wouldn't.

LEITPLANKENFÜHRUNG

Big hooks, that shoot out and hook onto the crash barrier. Very useful for... er, wearing out crash barriers. (If you had a small business that manufactures new ones and a contract with the local council, these would be very welcome.)

RAFENMESSER

Wheel spikes. If you're in a pub with someone, drinking wheels, you can spike them with this so that they'll get drunk more quickly than you. With hilarious consequences.

Moto Racer



(Above) Riding in the blood of former racers is cool, apparently.

(Right) Leaping onto his new bike, Quasimodo headed for The Bellrangers Arms.

When we asked **Patrick McCarthy** to have an early look at *Moto Racer*, he thought we wanted him to go to Tesco's and buy five savoy cabbages and a large packet of sea salt. He's since had his Dada hearing-aid replaced for a more conventional model.

CONSIDERING THE ENORMOUS number of driving games that have been made over the years, running the gamut of 'angles' from pure racing simulation to pure arcade thrash to any number of shoot 'em up, bash 'em up and zany 'em up variants, it's surprising that there haven't been more motorbike games.

(Below) "I'm nearly winning! And I've only got one wheel!" squealed Terence.



Especially if, as a developer, you want your game to have an "attitood" – and bikes come with one already thrown in, free of charge.

You don't even have to preface your description of the game with, "Look, I know it's a Bond Bug licence, but everyone's got these really big machetes..." No, all you have to say is just, "It's a biker game," and everyone goes, "Cool." And either description will conjure up one of two images, depending on the respondents' idea of cool: one is big, black metal and chrome monsters, cut-off denim jackets over leathers, handlebars that only an orang-utan could comfortably reach, a gang leader with a missing leg and a patch over one eye, and lots of limb-breaking. *Sim Sweden*, if you like. The other is fast-riding, colour co-ordinated bikes with plastic fairings, and people in outfits that resemble early sketches



Product details

Developer: Delphine

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Telephone: 01753 549442

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: End March

for Imperial Stormtroopers which were inadvertently left in the studio overnight and finished off by a colour-blind cleaner. The foremost biking game at the moment is EA's *Road Rash*, which manages to combine the assumed violence of the former scenario with the racing outfits of the latter.

Put a tiger in your tank

Moto Racer, developed by Delphine but also published by EA, goes strictly for the racing angle at the expense of the much-admired fisticuffs, bootcuffs or even leadpipe-icuffs which figure so prominently in *Road Rash*. As such, you might say they are eschewing the brutal, yang-orientated appeal of the older title in which the psyche of the





rider, and his relationship with the machine which bears him, are both subsumed beneath the greater need to dominate others physically. Instead, you might say they favour the more balanced yin-yang of the pure racing approach, the aesthete's pleasure in becoming as one with the bike, handling it in an almost spiritually uplifting concatenation (or union, for those who have problems with long words) of man and machine in its purest sense. But you'd have to be an incredible ponce.

So let's just say it's a pure racing game and leave it at that. In fact, any sort of contact with another rider or machine is a distinctly bad idea, unless you want to end up sliding face-first down the road, shedding leather and skin until you're leaving a trail of subcutaneous fat behind you like an extremely fast-moving slug. (Watch your eyelids on those cat's eyes, by the way.)

Mo-der bikin'...

You can expect to get all the long-established racing game options: you can practise on a course with nobody around to crash into and get run over by, play single races, or launch headlong into a season. As usual, there are some courses which will only become available once you've succeeded on others. And most importantly, for office workers and anyone else with access to a few high-falutin' cables, it looks there could be a number of multi-player options on the cards, too.

I should also tell you that you won't be restricted to boring old plastic-coated racing bikes, because there are two different race seasons to play through.



One involves the aforementioned hunch-backed racing bike shenanigans, but the other is moto-cross. That's right, those nutty trials bikes with five-foot suspension systems that take jumps so high you come down with snow on your helmet (there's a Helen Chadwick joke in there somewhere). As such, there's a wide variety of tracks, from desert levels and snow-bound levels to street races and straightforward (if that's the right word) moto-cross tracks.

Movin' dahn the Queen's hah-way...

As you're no doubt aware, Delphine are French. There are two easy to use equations which are always applied to game reviews. The first is: French

people + computer game = weird shit.

This clearly doesn't apply in this case (unless there's a hidden course we haven't

seen yet that features a troupe of competitors dressed as the Queen Mother, riding high-powered children's tricycles who race along playing *The Marseillaise* through Peruvian anal flutes).

The second is: French people + computer game = beautiful animation.

And this one is definitely applicable. It's hard to believe, but they seem to have gone to the trouble of motion-capturing the riders, who shift their weight authentically on the road bikes, and lean at kneecap-removing angles for tight turns. On the trials bikes it's even better, as they stick their feet out



(Above left) Despite dieting rigorously over the Christmas period, Bertrand was still far too heavy for the front half of his bike.

(Above) By the Spring, he'd long since given up trying to ride with both wheels grounded.

speedway-style and move backwards and forwards during jumps. Even the mudguards bounce about. It all looks very nice indeed and moves very quickly too – but it has to be said that as yet this version doesn't run full-screen, and some of the texture-mapping to the road surfaces is still unfinished.

As well as all the graphical loveliness, there are a number of neat touches too: a pull-a-wheelie button, for example, which sends you hurtling down the road with your front wheel pointing skywards like a pizza delivery man with Mike McShane's order on the back. And there are a number of different views to choose from, including a less than helpful pillion-seat-looking-backwards mode. But most important of all, there's a commentator who, when you do something particularly scary, says, "Shi-it." What more could you want? **Z**



Track to the future

The courses available, whether for the road or moto-cross bikes, are varied, and are going to look lovely when they're finished (dahling), but their intended location is puzzling. For example, Rock Forest, despite its name, is a more or less straightforward road course, and it's initially impossible to guess in which country it's based. There's a large windmill, which immediately makes you think of The Netherlands – except that there are several hill sections. Then you seem to pass under one of the viaducts from the Settle-to-Carlisle railway. But it can't be Britain, because there are some small windmills of a type usually associated with power generation which, as a renewable and environmentally-friendly energy resource, have been justifiably banned here. Then you come round a corner and there's the obligatory set of hot-air balloons which are de rigueur for racing games these days, rising a few feet into the air and falling to earth again with a thud after a few seconds. And that's when it clicks: it's Richard Branson's test centre.

(Below) This all looks very lovely, but you should try driving from this viewpoint.



The Need For Speed 2

Duncan MacDonald struggled for over an hour, hoping against hope that he could come up with a *Need For Speed* intro which didn't prop itself up with pathetic drug references. Sadly, he failed. Miserably.



(Above and right) The graphics have undergone a bit of a revamp, which means that the crashes will now be even more spectacular.

I'VE BEEN A FAN OF the first *The Need For Speed* game for considerably longer than most. How so? I'll tell you: I was one of the eight stupid people who shelled out for a 3DO console in 1994. Prat? Yes, I know. And I continue to be a prat, because I now own a Saturn rather than a PlayStation.

But that's a different story, so back to *The Need For Speed*, and just for those who never even got to see the original game (even on the PC), maybe a brief outline would be in order...

Six tracks: *The Need For Speed* contained six tracks, which doesn't sound like a particularly big deal until I tell you that three of these weren't 'closed circuits', but were in fact proper open roads.

Eight vehicles: Or eight 'flash motors',

(Below) The thrill of the open road... The new engine means that it'll be around 30 per cent faster.



if you prefer, all of which could

be bought – if rich enough – from real-life car showrooms: a Porsche 911, for example; a Ferrari something-or-other; a Lamborghini Diablo; and so on. All the cars, incidentally (or so they said), handled in a realistic manner. I can't vouch for that, but I can add that they certainly differed greatly from one to another. (My fave was the Porsche, 'cos the back end was twitchy.)

Traffic: The selling point! Two way traffic! Cars to overtake on a blind corner at 150mph, and, more importantly, oncoming cars to smash into on that same blind corner. Some of the crashes were stunning, and there was a comprehensive replay mode.

Filth: Overtake a cop car at over 55mph

and a car chase ensued, with you, obviously, as the chasée.

More: And there was more, but I want to end this paragraph and tell you what was crap about the game. Cue the next paragraph...

The next paragraph...

Crap things about *The Need For Speed*...

Okay, due to the design of the game engine the roads could only be viewed from one direction. It was possible to drive 'the wrong way', but in doing so you could only access the exterior car view, meaning you were constantly driving towards yourself, your joystick, and your monitor screen, with not a clue as to what bend or road vehicle was coming up next. Poo!

Another slightly crap thing about the game engine was that it tended, occasionally, to give you that 'streamed





straight from CD' feeling. You know? Like when you're confined to a small lateral area, and the scenery is being shoved at you?

Onto the artificial intelligence of the computer-controlled road users, then, and it wasn't brilliant. The general two-way traffic had pretty much no AI whatsoever, although oncoming cars would beep at you when you 'scared' them (just like real-life ones do, ho ho). Oh, and the coppers weren't overly bright either... but then again you could call that realism, I suppose. And as for the computer-controlled competitors, probably the best word to use here would be 'predictable'. They'd block and they'd shunt, but you tended to know where and when to expect this behaviour.

Er, but apart from that little lot, the original *The Need For Speed* was (and still is) one of the best car games about, so one can only assume the sequel will be (naïf American accent) 'awesome, and will kick ass'.

So what's the score?

I've got an incredibly unfinished version of the game which contains a couple of courses, but with no trackside scenery: just roads suspended in space, in other words. No 'traffic' in it, either, but I was able to do the main thing you couldn't do in the original - namely drive the wrong way round the track. So, an all-new game engine then, I bet. Let me just check the press release for details. (Reads for five minutes.) Yes, I was right, it's an all-new rendering engine. I'll paraphrase some of the other just-gleaned nuggets of info before I forget them. Righto, firstly is the fact that there's going to be a hell of a lot of 'off-road freedom' this time. I've already said that you can drive the wrong way, but apparently this is as nothing: there are to be short-cuts and alternative routes, some obvious, some harder

to find. Ramps, too, and also loads of unusual terrain, plus interactive roadside objects. Add to this the 'all new revamped instant replay system' and things are beginning to sound very groovy indeed (what with the proper 360 degree view of the track allowing for panning cameras rather than just 'behind the car' jobs).

But what about the actual track visuals? Where's the game set? Well, it sounds as if things are a bit more cosmopolitan this time around, not to mention surreal (or naïf - time will tell). No longer are we confined to the States, because the programmers, and I quote: "have taken areas of the world that they believe would provide a captivating driving experience, and have compressed all the distinctive characteristics of these regions - much like a caricature - into the courses." In other words, they've done stuff like take Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Opera House and the desert roads of the outback and spliced them into the Australian track. Likewise they've taken twisty mountain roads, ice caves, Tibetan villages, swinging rope bridges and scrunched them all into

(Left) As before, all the cars will handle differently - which means skids ahoy if you opt for the Lambo.

(Right) The idea for *NFS2* is to give the player more freedom - hence the new 'go where you choose' game engine.



Product details

Developer: EA Canada

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Telephone: 01753 549442

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: April

the Himalayan Track. (If England's in there, I bet you a zillion pounds that Big Ben will feature.)

What about the cars?

The original *The Need For Speed* had the Road & Track licence. Road & Track have now been ditched in favour of real car manufacturers in an effort to get closer to the engineers and what have you: more feedback, more realism. And the cars themselves? Eight supercars, some of which are actual production vehicles, some of which are 'concept' cars. If you want a list, then here it is: the McLaren F1, the Lotus Esprit v8, the Ital Design Cala, the Ford GT90, the Lotus GT1, the Ford Indigo, the Isdera Commendatore 112i and the Jaguar XJ220.

If the early code we've seen is anything to go by, *NFS2* looks to be shaping up very nicely indeed. Not only will it sport all of the playability of the first game, but the developers claim that it'll run around 30 per cent faster in glorious hi-res and will also feature extensive multi-player and Internet modes. I can see those pile-ups now. **Z**

(Below) The detail level and frame rate is quite high considering this is such early code. The finished game will support multi-player network games as well as Internet play.



Pro Pinball

Timeshock!

Of all the pinball releases last year, *Pro Pinball – The Web* wiped the floor and left the competition beaten and bloody. How could the next table possibly be any better, asks **Jeremy Wells**.



Product details

Developer: Empire Development Oxford

Publisher: Empire Interactive

Telephone: 0181 343 7337

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: May

TO SAY THAT THE CHAPS AT EDO ARE into pinball is a bit like saying the Pope's a bit religious. In fact, they're totally obsessed with it. Their development HQ situated just outside Oxford is crammed with pinball machines, bits of pinball machines and more bits of pinball machines that they've taken apart and measured, textured and probably cracked in their teeth to check the authenticity. Basically, they're all pinball mad.

Pro Pinball – The Web (we'll just refer to it as 'The Web' from now on, shall we?) was clearly the best pinball game released for the PC ever, and it was quickly adopted by pinball addicts all over the globe as the definitive pinball sim. This was largely due to two factors: a) it was very, very playable and b) the developers, all being pinball mad (as we've already mentioned) clearly knew better than everyone else what it is that makes a good table. Some shallow types criticised it for being too samey because there was only one table, but real pinball fans thought this was irrelevant. Accurate ball physics, realistic flipper movement and a classic table design counted for a lot more than five or six tables which were essentially the same, and that was why *The Web* cleaned up.

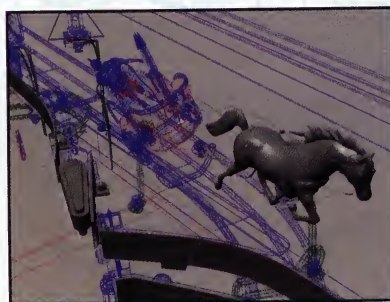
Not being anything of a wizard on the flippers myself (suffice to say my scores on *The Web* were more akin to my yearly income than Paul McCartney's) I just thought it was a nice pinball game. Lead programmer Ade Barritt agrees, but admits that compared to *Timeshock!*

the original game was very basic. "I'm actually a bit embarrassed by it now. When you play *Timeshock!* and then go back to *The Web* it just feels really primitive. That's why we've basically rewritten everything: the ball physics, the whole flipper thing. That's something we're really proud of now. Previously, the flippers would affect the ball; now the ball actually affects the flippers as well. As far as we can tell this is unique. It's all a lot more subtle now, which means you can do all sorts of different tricks and shots. The balls now spin and actually roll – they can even bounce and hit the glass. It's a lot more realistic."

They're nutters!

As well as overhauling the mechanics of the game, it's also changed a lot graphically. The ridiculously hi-res mode options are still intact, and consequently the table is incredibly detailed. It took over a year to draw, and when Ade tells me that the bulbs have filaments and the microswitches have diodes and wires, I'm not in the least bit surprised that it took so long. You'll need an 8MB graphics card to appreciate this detail in 1600x1200 in 16-bit colour, but the premise is that it's there if you want it.

To ensure that *Timeshock!* remains the king of all tables, they've also introduced new lighting effects, heaps more animation, drop magnets, a



(Left) An early shot of the unfinished table – still brimming with detail.

(Above) Early sketches and renderings for part of the dot matrix display.

(Right) How to make the most accurate pinball simulation ever.

Step 1: Take loads of pinball tables apart and study how they work.

Step 2: Redraw the bits using sophisticated 3D software – 3D Studio and Alias should do nicely. NB. The wearing of a baseball cap 'round the wrong way is optional.

Step 3: Once you've got your very hi-res wireframe...

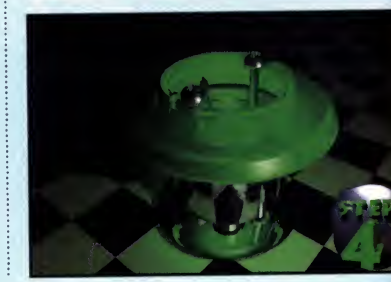
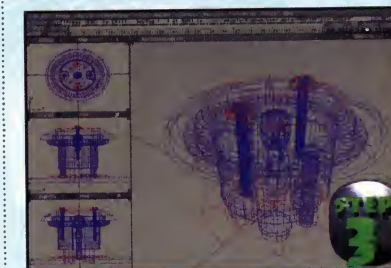
Step 4: ...texture it and light it.

Repeat several thousand times for each component and then assemble. Easy.

(Left) You won't actually see a lot of the detail, it's just too small to see – but it's there nevertheless.

magno save feature, an indulgent new plot based on time travel, a very comprehensive play editor that allows you to fully customise the game, and the option to play on-line against other pinball junkies.

In other words, if you liked *The Web*, you'll just melt when you get your hands on *Pro Pinball – Timeshock!* later this year – it's without a doubt going to be the most impressive pinball sim ever (again). **Z**





This is a city with a secret. The children that used to crowd its streets are vanishing one by one, and no one knows where or why they've gone.



Perhaps Miette, a streetwise kid with a knack for petty theft could be the one with the skill and cunning to solve the mystery.

But can a child survive in such a strange and fantastical city, full of dangerous characters? Is she up to such a bizarre mission?

Or, more to the point, are you?

The City of Lost Children



iF22

Air Superiority Fighter



Boldly doing what no man has done before, Paul Mallinson treks off to the States for an exclusive first look at Interactive Magic's forthcoming new flight sim.

(Right) A minimum spec of a P90 is required to play *iF22 ASF* as nature intended, which is generous when you consider what it's chucking around.

WHAT KIND OF PERSON WOULD you have to be want to program a flight sim? I asked myself this upon arrival at Interactive Magic's spacious new offices in Raleigh, North Carolina for an early peek at their new *F22* sim. I had a mental picture of the flight sim programmer: living his life from within a darkened cave of stained *Jane's* manuals and moist assembly language printouts. I hoped I wouldn't be bored to death, or have an over-enthusiastic flight nut spitting in my face for three hours while extolling the virtues of thrust vectoring.

Okay, I saw the odd *Jane's* manual, but the darkened cave populated by I-Magic's development teams turned out to be a surprisingly lively mixture of the creative artist-type, the serious number-crunchers and the hard-partying flight model programmer with an ear for a good joke – in other words, they were all normal.

(Right) Look out for a few surprises hidden within the texture-mapped terrain, although we're not going to tell you what or where they are...

(Below) The programmers would probably mean if we omitted to mention the multi-player missions, which range from head-to-head to 'capture the flag'.

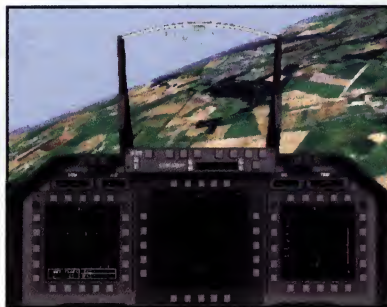


Phew, dry face

Mike McCoy, the lead designer of *iF22 Air Superiority Fighter*, seemed a pleasant enough chap and it became clear from my early questioning that I wouldn't be machine-gunned by mind-numbing jargon, so at least my face would stay dry. I asked Mike what an average working day consisted of.

"I get in in the morning, test the game, test what we put in the night before, figure out what problems we have, answer questions... actually, 50 per cent of my day consists of people coming in saying, 'Hey, you know that code you had for whatever – those equations – well, they don't work,' so I then try to figure out what's going on. There's a lot of tweaking."

iF22 had three different game designers working on it, all of whom had been involved in the conceptual and early development of the project.



"Together we produced these design documents." McCoy pulls out two doorstop-sized binders so chock-full of information it'd take a team of four to lift them. "They're pretty immense. We didn't just throw this together!"

Yeah, so you'd read a couple of books, but what about access to a real *F22*?

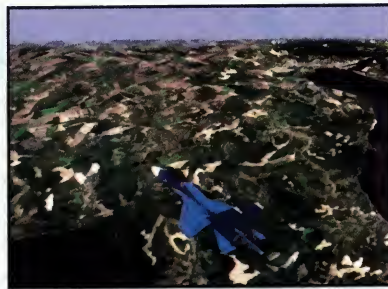
"We went down to Lockheed for a demo of their unclassified simulator. It was interesting – it had a lot of things in there that we knew about already, plus a few that we didn't. Congress has allocated more funds to the project so the *F22* has still to go into production."

But then, what did I know about real world flying?

Gotta have a USP

I did know something about flying on a PC, and, taking note of *iF22 ASF*'s impressive USPs (Unique Selling Points: fully light-sourced 3D engine, state of





the art flight model, revolutionary new terrain engine), I asked Mike what he'd do to make Interactive Magic's F22 sim better than the efforts of everyone else.

"Well, we're going to have a dynamic campaign system."

What's that when it's at home?

"The only thing that has been pre-designed by our guys here is the environment itself, the world in which the player flies around. For example, we know that in this scenario we're going to be in the Ukraine and that we're going to be fighting against a particular kind of enemy."

"What's going to happen is that when you go into a mission or campaign, it'll set up the world first, then the program will look at the terrain and assign ground objects accordingly. So it will populate the world with enemies, allocating targets, as well as your F22 bases and support vehicles. We have some really good algorithms which will do that. It will say 'Here's the frontline - so we need tanks over here, fighting other tanks, some Bradleys, and the SAM sites go over here'."

Top marks for homework

The box of a competitor's product is spotted by this eagle-eyed reporter on a nearby shelf. Both NovaLogic and EIDOS have recently released F22 games in the States, setting a benchmark in the process. Pointing this out, I wondered if either game was cause for concern for Mike and his team.

"I don't think that they were trying to do the same kind of things that we are. They were a bit more arcade-like, whereas while we want to make our game accessible to everyone, it's actually geared mainly toward serious flight sim 'gurus'."

In that case, how would his game compare to heavyweights such as *Falcon 4.0* or DID's forthcoming F22 sim?

"We're all aiming at the same type of player, but where we're really going to

excel is with avionics, campaign system and the terrain."

As far as the avionics are concerned, we'll have to wait and see because they're not actually finished yet. The terrain system, on the other hand, is steaming along at a rate of knots, the results of which are plainly obvious when you watch the game in action. All three scenarios - over Bosnia, the Ukraine and the Gulf - are being photo-realistically reproduced using a combination of satellite photography and clever programming. Mike was on hand to explain.

"We get real world digital elevation data (which is the height information) from companies that specialise in mapping out terrain by bouncing radar from their orbiting satellites. There's a lot of correction to be done afterwards because sometimes radar goes right through water and you end up with deep valleys that shouldn't be there."

"Once you have the depth and elevation map, the next step is to overlay the satellite photo on top. If they don't match up you sometimes get what appears to be a town with a mountain stuck in the middle of it. It's real tricky, but the results are astounding."

And were they?

And, yea verily, the results were truly astounding. But was it Mike's idea to do all this fancy texture-mapping malarkey?

"When I joined the company last January, they had already come up with the idea for the terrain. We knew what we wanted to do, so I then had to figure out how to do it." He then went on to tell me that at a recent demonstration of their program, I-Magic had been confronted by a genuine Russian pilot who recognised a town he used to fly over on part of their texture-mapped terrain. For I-Magic it's a story that will run and run, and will no doubt be of interest to their rivals. **Z**



(Far left) The cockpit is 'live' during play, so if you click on any of the visible buttons it will activate accordingly.

(Left) Rumoured to have cost in excess of \$100,000, the data for iF22's landscapes is supplied via satellite to stunning effect.

Product details

Developer: Interactive Magic

Publisher: Interactive Magic

Telephone: 01344 409399

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: May



It's, like, clever texture-mapping

Eee, things have come a long way since *Night Flight* on the Spectrum, haven't they? I remember when there were no ground details in my flight sims, and you could leave your front door wide open and no one would come in and rob you. Progress, eh? By 'eck, who'd've thought?



Real satellite photos, costing zillions of dollars, are sent to the artists for retouching and finishing.



Real world elevation data, costing trillions of dollars, is added and finished satellite textures applied.



Add one flight model, cost: priceless, and it looks as though you're flying in the real world.

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MICRO PROSE

It augurs well for a game when Germany won't allow it to be sold there. So hooray for *Carmageddon*: the Krauts get a sanitised version, we get the full monty. But hang on, what is the full monty exactly? **Duncan MacDonald** sort of knows...

Carmageddon

IN PRODUCTION



(Left) Hopes for a German release of the game aren't high.

pokey-out bit of England," says Sam, sagely. "It's just that there's a moat surrounding it."

"Aaaah... the Solent?"

"Exactly. The island's near enough to Southampton to warrant a bridge or a tunnel, but the islanders don't want one built. They like the isolation."

"Blimey."

"They call us mainlanders."

"Yikes. Do they have sheep?"

"Yes, they have sheep. Lots of sheep." An hour passed.

YOU WILL NO DOUBT HAVE NOTICED that in last month's PC Zone there was a small piece about *Carmageddon* in the news pages, and an appetising (but, alas, brief) rolling demo on the coverdisk. Were you intrigued, though? And did you want more? Well, you've got it, because this month the PC Zone *Carmageddon* coverage continues apace with not only these two pages of fawning, but also with a playable track on the coverdisk.

And I'm going to assume you have played it. And played it. And played it. And that you eventually stopped playing it, or else you wouldn't be reading this.

It's big, though, isn't it? Bloody gigantic, really. And did you like the fact that you can drive down cliffs? And how the physics modelling is spot-on? And that you can actually 'feel' the impacts, and see the resultant damage? What were your pedestrian kills like, by the way? Artistically viable or what? Or did you just race the other cars, like a ponce? Which view did you use? But I'm running ahead of myself. You've had a wee taste of the game, I'm apparently slotted in to actually review it next ish, so how about we fade into flashback

mode – in which I visit Stainless Software, the authors of *Carmageddon*, who live and work (spookily) on the Isle of Wight...

Geography lesson

Tuesday lunch-time, the end of January, and I'm on the 'slow' ferry from Southampton to the Isle of Wight. I'm with Sam, the PR bloke for SCI, who's explaining the difference between 'slow' ferry and 'fast' ferry...

"This one takes about an hour." He sips his coke, puffs on a tab, and points through the gigantic ship window at an approaching hydrofoil: "And that one takes 15 minutes."

"So the island's quite near then is it?" I say. (I'd always thought of the Isle of Wight as being quite far out to sea.)

"Yes, it's very near," says Sam.

"You can see it, look."

"Aha!" I say. "I, er, thought that was just a pokey-out bit of England."

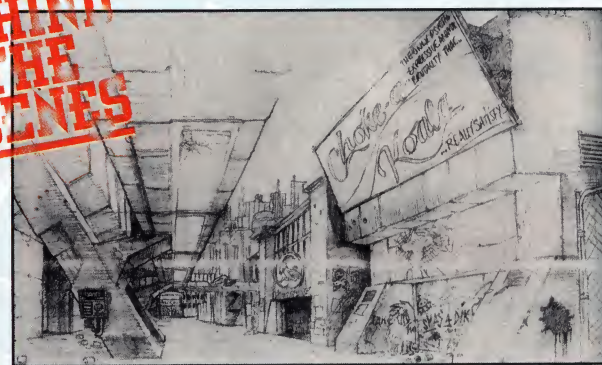
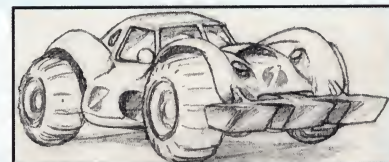
"The Isle of Wight is just a

(Above) Severed limbs are a common sight in this highly tasteful driving sim.

(Right and below) Some early sketches of what was then a run-of-the-mill driving game. Er, it's a bit different now.

The oldest taxi driver in the world...

Another incorrect assumption: I thought we'd be able to walk from the jetty to Stainless Software. In fact I thought we'd be able to walk from the jetty to *everywhere*. But the Isle of Wight's a tad bigger than that. Cue the oldest taxi driver in the world – a woman, aged about 400.



Product details

Developer: Stainless Software

Publisher: SCI

Telephone: 0171 585 3308

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: May

“I’ll drop you off at B&Q dear. You should be able to find where you’re looking for from there.”

“Thanks,” said Sam.

Eventually we did manage to locate the Stainless Software office, and were greeted by Patrick, the MD, who’s all hair and beard. A suit-free zone, then. There was much laughter and merriment emanating from a nearby room, which we duly entered.

The cause of the merriment was now obvious: it was the Stainless staff playing *Carmageddon* and enjoying replays. Again and again. Think about it, though: these blokes have been working on the game for god knows how long, yet here they were, hooting and hollering as if they’d just seen it for the first time. “Speaks volumes,” I thought. Eventually the room cleared and Patrick started to show me the current state of *Carmageddon*.

“There are basically three ways to play,” he explained. “First, you can just race the other cars, through the checkpoints, in an attempt to place first.”

Fair enough.

“Or, of course, you can go for the pedestrians. Kill them all for a win – not forgetting that you also get points for style.”

Okey dokey.

“Finally, you can attempt to take out all the other cars: the last one left moving is the winner.”

He proceeded to show me some of the tracks – although ‘worlds’ would really be more appropriate.

“How many are there?” I asked.

“Thirty-six in total,” he replied.

Blimey.

“There are five totally different environments, too,” he added. “And 25 cars, many of which you’ll be able to drive yourself.”

As you’ll have seen from the cover CD, no part of the ‘game map’ is off-limits,



(Above) You want gore? You’ve got it.

(Above right) You want tracks? *Carmageddon* has 36. Blimey!



(Above) One of the many vehicles you’ll come across in this fantastic splat-fest.

(Below) Loads of tracks, loads of locations, and loads of blood. Smart.

(Below right) A city track. But you probably could have guessed that, couldn’t you?

and this is true of all 36 tracks: if there’s a ledge, you can fall off it. If there’s a tall building, there’s probably a ramp somewhere, aiming towards it. That sort of thing, and much, much more.

Check this out...

“Check this out,” said Patrick, who had just loaded in the ‘abandoned mine’ track/world. He was zooming about, trying to locate one of the biggest drops in the game and, once he’d found it, he did exactly what you or I would’ve done.

Wow. The car bounced and buckled off the sides of the vertical mine shaft

all the way down to what must surely have been the centre of the earth. Then...

‘Kerrrrrruunch!!!’ The car folded. Superb. Then we watched the replay, which looked even better.

“The replay camera is intelligent,” explained

Patrick. “It knows where you’re going and switches to the best positions as you drop or pass. It makes sure your view is never blocked.”

Then he loaded up a track which had a ‘beach scene’, à la *Baywatch*. And what carnage followed! What superb artistry. Blood and oil, all over the sand, and not a single surfer (or cow) spared. And then, switching to the inside cockpit view, Patrick plunged into the sea. Cool. There was a Pamela Anderson chick paddling about and, being submerged, all we could see from within the cockpit were her legs. Patrick floored the throttle, and then switched to the

replay. Automatic close-up of screaming girl, with distant ‘fin’ (ie the top bit of the car) heading towards her from behind.

Splooosh. Scream. Gib city. Excellent. Here we



have a small British software company, located in the middle of nowhere, with only nine members of staff, and yet what’s being produced will blow you away. If I was into buying shares, I’d buy some in this.

Nuts and bolts

The philosophy at Stainless Software is that the player should never feel constricted, and that certainly applies to *Carmageddon*. However, that doesn’t mean you’re given complete freedom and no gameplay: there’s a proper ‘structure’ involved, in which you work your way up the rankings from 99th to First place, and, as you progress, are given access to new tracks, power-ups and hardware. Or something like that, anyway. Wait for the review to see how these sorts of things click into place (although I strongly suspect we’re looking at a game to rival *Quake*).

Personally, though, I’m even more interested in seeing what’ll happen when a *Daily Snail* journo gets wind of it. Imagine the outcry! Still, just to pre-empt the bastards I’ve written my own *Daily Snail*-style shock horror piece. Have a look at the panel below and compare it with the real McCoy when the shit eventually hits the fan... **Z**

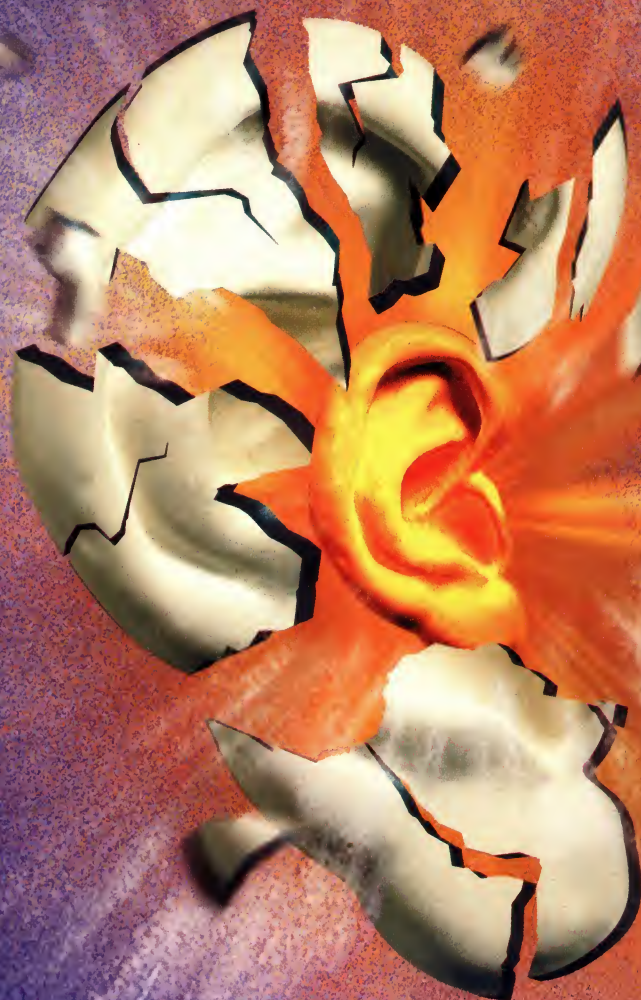


Society must decide

The warnings are being ignored, but for countless youngsters these heinous games are simply part of everyday culture: blah blah blah. Decline of morals: blah blah blah. Innocent children unwittingly exposed to Satan’s squirly bowel movements: blah blah blah. Mentally scarred infants: blah blah blah. Tiny kittens, butchered mercilessly. Blah blah. Hail Mary. Hail Mary. Blah blah. *Carmageddon* threatens our comfortable middle class existence: blah blah. Makes a mockery of those who died in the two World Wars: blah blah. We must stand firm. Blah blah. This darkly seductive game will turn children into drug addicts, muggers, rapists, lesbians, and one-parent families. Blah blah. It is vital to send the right signals to youngsters before it’s too late. Blah blah. We must bring back National Service if we’re to avoid this terrible cultural degeneration. Blah blah. String everybody up. Blah blah. Hanging’s too good for ‘em. Blah blah. Moral apocalypse. Blah blah blah... (Continued on page 900.)

Brenda Slagge, *Daily Snail*





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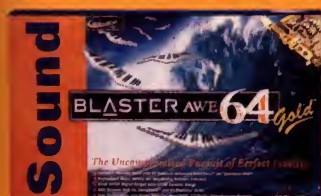
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Yes
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SPRING '97



Unreal

Part Two



It's looking increasingly likely that Epic MegaGame's *Unreal* will usurp *Quake* from its monarchical role as King of 3D Action Games. David McCandless follows its development in cute diary form – welcome to Part Two (of several).



AS PROMISED LAST MONTH, THIS edition of our diary will focus on the mind behind *Unreal*. The Brain of Morbius, if you like, which powers and controls the versatile automaton which is the *Unreal* engine. The mind belongs to Tim Sweeney, a CodeGod, a King Coder, an UberGeek, Captain Compiler, Emperor Algorithm or – in this day and age – a clever bloke who has made a large amount of sovs from programming games. Granted a brief e-mail audience with the man, we fired off a few choice quezzies:

PCZ: Tim Sweeney – you're a CodeGod and director at Epic MegaGames. How does that work? Are there any other jobs you do?

Tim: I founded Epic, and I own the majority of the company. Right now I spend about 90 per cent of my work-time programming *Unreal*; the other ten per cent concerns other Epic stuff. Nigel Kent and Mark Rein run the business side of Epic, and I only get involved in the occasional really big deals.

PCZ: What are the main qualifications for a CodeGod?

Tim: When you spend the majority of your waking hours programming, you get good at it.

PCZ: Where the hell do you start when programming a 3D engine? Is it a case of waking up one morning and saying, "Hmmm, I'll do a 3D virtual universe today?"

Tim: I started *Unreal* about 18 months ago. In the past, I had programmed *ZZT* and *Jill Of The Jungle*, but because I'd been spending most of my time on the business/producing side of Epic, I hadn't touched a C compiler for over a year.

In the first few days, I got a window open on the screen and had a dot moving around the screen in response to the mouse.

By the end of the first week, I was drawing 3D lines. Second week, flat-shaded polygons. Second month, simple objects and boolean CSG operations. Third month, ugly, depth-shaded texture-mapping. Fourth month, lights and shadows. Fifth month, dynamic lights and simple actors. And so on.



(Above) Looks like *Quake* from where I'm standing, except much nicer, obviously.

Anyone who wants to get into 3D programming should just start with the basics and slowly work their way up. A lot of those who become frustrated and give up do so because they try to go too fast, and their code gets ahead of their working knowledge.

PCZ: So, are there any features you'd have liked to have squished into the *Unreal* engine which didn't make it?

Tim: We won't know that till the game is finished.

PCZ: Okay, but there are a bunch of new 3D games coming up – *Hexen II*, *Jedi Knight* etc. Will you feel a little apprehensive when these titles appear, in case they outdo or come close to your own vision?

Tim: Those will be great games, and *Unreal* will be a different kind of great game. We expect we'll release it after both titles, so they won't be moving targets, and the team is working very hard to make *Unreal* the best it can be.

PCZ: Did *Quake*'s appearance present a setback to your plans, or force you to make some alterations to your engine?

Tim: Not really – *Quake* was what we expected it to be.



(Left) It's a dark, atmospheric room with... hang on, something's missing... what can it be?...

(Right) ...a bloody big gun. That's more like it.





PCZ: Unreal has a few similarities to Quake, both graphically and gameplay-wise. Do you think players might start to feel Quake-fatigue?

Tim: In gameplay, Steven Polge's AI and our enhanced play mechanics make Unreal a different kind of game in both single-player and multi-player. Graphically, the 16-bit textures, coloured lighting, and outdoor landscapes give us a very distinct look.

PCZ: What is your vision of Unreal multi-player?

Tim: Tons of servers spread around the Net, each one running custom levels made with UnrealEd, with players running around from server to server in a Web-style fashion. It will probably have more of an awe and exploration feel than Quake, with a bit less adrenaline rush.

PCZ: So what's your opinion about the current mess concerning 3D graphics cards?

Tim: It is a mess.

PCZ: Indeed, but what exactly are the advantages of using Direct 3D and the Windows GUI? Does it bestow on you as a programmer a range of shortcuts, or is it still hard graft algorithms all the way?

Tim: Windows is a much better operating system than DOS because of its Internet support and device independence, but it has its share of programming headaches. In general, though, 90 per cent of my code, and 100 per cent of my die-hard algorithms, are clean C++ code. I insulate my core code from the OS code as much as possible.

PCZ: Unreal is gonna be a very big title for the Nintendo 64. How does programming Unreal for the N64 compare to programming it for the PC?

Tim: DMA Design is doing the N64 porting. The CPU speed and polygon engine are excellent. The main challenge is getting everything to fit into the machine's small amount of RAM.

PCZ: Which elements do you think will become most integral to the action game of 2000? Engine, AI, or multi-player?

Tim: It's something else, which I call an ecosystem: the sum of the engine, game, editing tools, gamers, and a diverse community of users doing cool stuff with it all – creating levels, setting up game servers, running Web pages etc.

This will be vital to success – that's why I'm investing time in creating not just a raw game, but also the editing tools, scripting system, and expandable engine which people can build upon.

Right now, gaming – even multi-player gaming – feels annoyingly static. You can have fun shooting and interacting, but you're conditioned not to expect any true surprises. Once you have downloadable levels and content though, gaming suddenly becomes dynamic. You truly don't know what's around the next corner: it might be an entirely new level with an entirely new theme, running on some far-away server.

PCZ: What does a CodeGod do in his spare time?

Tim: If one has spare time, one is definitely not a CodeGod.

(Left) A level editor like no other. This one will allow you to more or less create your own games. Now that's something worth shouting about.

Product details

Developer: Epic MegaGames

Publisher: GT Interactive

Telephone: 0171 258 3791

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: May

PCZ: Are you any good at Quake?

Tim: I'm ok, but all the players I know are much better, so I tend to get my ass kicked.

PCZ: Who would you prefer to go for a drink with? Quake programmer, John Carmack or Heather Locklear? And why?

Tim: Unless Heather Locklear seriously polishes up on her 3D algorithms, I'd prefer Carmack.

PCZ: Is Canada boring?

Tim: Canada is cool. I live in Rockville, Maryland. Maryland is boring.

PCZ: Favourite game of all time?

Tim: Doom – its technology has now been beaten, but it was probably the largest single leap in realism that gaming will ever experience.

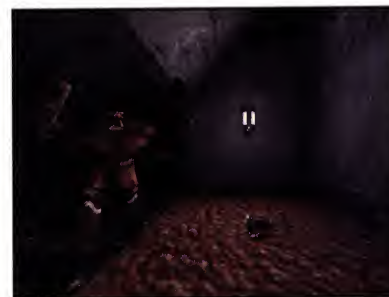
PCZ: Favourite game at the moment?

Tim: Counting stuff I'm more or less impartial about, I'm having a great time with the 7th Legion beta.

PCZ: Which is your favourite Spice Girl?

Tim: Spice Girl?

PCZ: Don't worry we'll guess that one for you. Let's see, there's SportySpice, SlaggySpice, ScarySpice – is there a CodeySpice? **Z**



(Left) Check out that architecture. Soon you will be able to create works of art like this using UnrealEd.

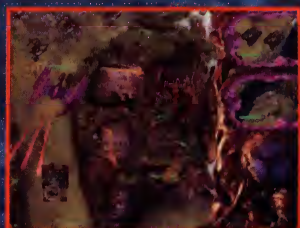
(Right) Character AI is something that the guys at Epic are working really hard on – the idea is to make the NPCs to be tough, like human players.



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REVIEW ZONE



The keenly awaited *Theme Hospital* from Bullfrog is finally here (thankfully it hasn't gone down with delay-itis like *Dungeon Keeper*) – and jolly good it looks too! We've been following the development of this game for quite a while now, and as expected it plays as well as it looks. There's also some cracking new *Quake* levels to check out this month and finally the glorious *Magic: The Gathering* from MicroProse.

THE ZONE SCORING SYSTEM



90+ CLASSIC

The highest accolade a game can attain. A wonderful example of gaming excellence that deserves to be recognised and indeed cherished, or something.



80-89 RECOMMENDED

An excellent game that simply lacks that certain something that makes it one of the true greats. Well worth checking out, though.



20 and below PANTS

Absolutely bloody awful. Crap with a capital C. Naff with a capital N. You get the picture.



486 FRIENDLY

The DX2 is still one of the most popular spec machines, but how do you know what games will run on the thing? This icon shows you which games you can still enjoy even if you don't have a ninja Pentium.

Looking back

Flying Corps

I must admit that flight sims normally bore the pants off me. Modern flight sims, that is. Zooming about the place at a zillion knots, targeting an enemy who's barely visible and then letting off a fire and forget missile at twenty-odd thousand feet is about as challenging as playing my sister at two-player *Tetris* (she's crap by the way, but it keeps me in extra beer money). Old-fashioned WWI flight sims on the other hand, now that's a different story. Gently easing back on the stick and chugging up to a couple of thousand feet before letting rip with a machinegun with a range measured in inches before making a troubled landing at 50-odd mph:



that's what it's all about. That takes skill. You have to fly those crates, not press a few buttons and switch to auto-pilot. The sooner I can get my hands on a force feedback joystick the better. At the moment, I'll just have to be content with playing *Flying Corps* with my trusty CH Flight Stick and pretending. Anyway, to get to the point, Rowan have truly surpassed themselves. *Flying Corps* is just awesome. You really have to fly, navigate and shoot by the seat of your pants. That's what flight sims should really be like – and it looks gorgeous (what a bonus).

If you're a bit bored with the likes of *EF2000* and *US Navy Fighters*, give it a go – it'll make a nice change.

Jeremy Wells, Editor

The Ultima phenomenon

In 1983 Richard Garriott wrote *Ultima 1*. Who would have guessed that this game would spawn seven follow-ups? Even now the *Ultima* series is widely regarded as the best example of its genre. On top of all that, *Ultima Underworld* is still spoken of in revered tones by many game journalists, including many of us here at *Zone*. With *Ultima On-line* and *Ultima 9* both on the way, it just occurred to me that despite several



releases by other publishers over the years which attempted to cash in on the *Ultima* thing, no one has come anywhere near taking Richard Garriott's RPG throne away from him.

So what's he doing right that everyone else is obviously doing wrong? Well, let's look at *Diablo* for instance. Everyone's raving about it (except certain clueless games magazines who are obviously completely out of touch with gamers the world over), yet it still doesn't have any of the magic the *Ultima* games had. There's very little character interaction, and this is where I think everyone's going wrong. RPGs should captivate you with a fantastic storyline and



PROCESSOR-HUNGRY

Some games run slowly, even on high-spec machines with ninjascope graphics cards. Just run something like *Magic Carpet* in hi-res on virtually any PC and you end up with something running in Jerk-o-vision.



WINDOWS 95

Speaks for itself really – if it's got this icon slapped on it, it's been designed to take advantage of all that Windows 95 offers.

90+	CLASSIC
80-89	RECOMMENDED
70-79	GOOD
50-69	AVERAGE
40-49	BELOW AVERAGE
20-39	POOR
20 and below	PANTS

In perspective

This is designed to be a purely visual guide as to how games of a similar style compare to one another. The bars do not relate to previous review scores... they are simply an indication of how the reviewer feels about the products on a sliding scale.

Game 1

Game 2

PC Zone use Dan PCs exclusively 'cos they're absolutely fab. If you want any more info on Dan machines, you can call them on:

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Thanks this issue to

- Jason @ MicroProse
- Cathy @ Bullfrog
- David & Harriet @ EA
- The Wireplay chaps
- Petoir @ GT
- Simi @ Maxis
- Lidia @ EIDOS
- All the people who sent us beer

- Plus – Welcome back Stevie McK!

(Right) *Pod* – crap name – great game.
Die Hard Trilogy – Yipee-Ayeeh-Mother Kisser!

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introduce you to characters you get to identify with throughout the game. Don't get me wrong, I've been playing *Diablo* to death and I think it's great, but it just doesn't have that extra something that makes it an all-time great, hence John's score of 88 in the last issue. Still, as long as Richard Garriott keeps producing ground-breaking RPGs who's complaining, eh? Here's hoping *Ultima 9* will be the absolute corker we're all expecting.

Chris Anderson, Deputy Editor

The Internet

Heard the saying 'Internet schminternet'? That was me that was, about two years ago when I first discovered the so-called 'Information Superhighway'. Bored to tears with reams of self-indulgent and pointless Web whaffle I'd made my mind up: 'the Internet is rubbish'.

But now I spend a fair bit of time browsing quality, informative material and my overall opinion of the Internet has changed. There's more intelligent, better-designed stuff these days – especially for the gamer – www.gamesmansion.co.uk, www.happypuppy.com, or www.gameslice.com are favourites for impartial games news.

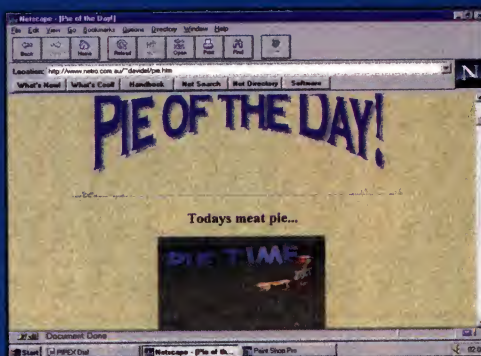
I've also spent a lot of my spare time recently on the official Half Man Half Biscuit homepage

(<http://spencer.nott.ac.uk/~etxgw/hmh.html>), at www.viz.co.uk to brush up on my swearing, or keeping abreast of world pie developments at www.dmi.net/pie/ (yes, really!).

www.newspapers.com is a fantastic resource, with links to every major newspaper in the world, and the number of decent Internet shopping sites is increasing – PC Zone having recently procured a large order of discounted music CDs from www.action-records.co.uk.

I could go on for ages about all the good stuff I've found recently. The Net's great – I've changed my mind. Get yourself a modem while the going's good.

Paul Mallinson, News Editor



Cool games

We see hundreds of games over the months but there are a few that we hang on to and continue to play at lunchtime/when we're supposed to be doing more important stuff...

Theme Hospital
 Ecstasica II
 Flying Corps
 Diablo
 Quake: Scourge Levels



Crap games

There are some games that you can leave in the middle of the room with a big sign next to them saying "please steal me" and you still can't get rid of the bloody things...

Super League Pro Rugby
 The Dark Hour (Quake add-on disk)
 Beavis & Butt-Head: Calling All Dorks
 Phantasmagoria 2
 Daytona USA

Theme Hos

Charlie Brooker once went to hospital to have a mole removed. Well, he always did love animals, but rarely did he get quite so stuck in. Anyway, let's see if the latest release from Bullfrog is capable of getting its tongue round his flies, or whether it'll merely croak it...

ONE OF THE STRANGEST MOMENTS of my entire life occurred one summer's evening in 1994. I was being thrown out of a flat at the time. Not my fault, I hasten to add – the entire household was refusing to pay the rent, for reasons that were entirely justified, but far too dull to repeat here. Anyway, the landlord – a squat, stocky guy who had so much extraneous body hair he looked like he'd liberally smeared himself with glue and rolled around on a gorilla's carpet for a couple of days – was outside, hammering on the front door with his ugly little fists, hollering abuse in the inept way that only a particularly stupid proponent of pidgin English can ("You are scum! I kill your face!" etc), and selfishly demanding that we remove the ironing board we'd used to barricade the entrance with, so that he could come in and beat us to death – which, according to him, was something he was legally entitled to do.

(Right)
Neat things Part 1: EPIDEMICS
Sometimes, you'll be alerted to the outbreak of a very serious epidemic within your wards. At this point, you'll be given two choices: officially declare an epidemic (which dents your reputation, and incurs a heavy fine), or attempt a cover-up. Cover-ups are a risky business (you've got a time limit in which to try to contain the outbreak by running around vaccinating the carriers) and can lead to permanent closure if you get caught out.

World of interiors

If there's one 'theme' that truly relates both *Theme Park* and *Theme Hospital*, then copious amounts of vomiting is it. Get down on your knees and pray that you have sufficient cleaning staff to deal with a 'vomit virus', should such an outbreak occur. Otherwise, the consequences are dire: corridors full of retching, choking patients, emptying their guts all over the floor like E-Coli sufferers at a kebab-eating convention.

Well, *Theme Hospital* also introduces a new bodily function into the fray... urine, to be precise. If a patient can't get to the toilet in time, they'll eventually go on the floor. Doubly disgusting during an outbreak of vomiting.

If Bullfrog keep upping the 'body fluid' stakes like this, the next 'Theme' game should logically be filled with hundreds of little people endlessly vomiting, pissing, crapping, spitting, wanking, snorting, and picking the wax out of their ears and flicking it. *Theme Reading Festival*, in other words.



I was scared, I don't mind telling you. Not because I was afraid of him (the only circumstances under which he'd be scary would be if you found him sitting on your lap, winking and wriggling

around), but I was afraid of one of the more specific threats he kept making: namely, to return with a van-load of his 'friends', who were considerably larger, bolder, and far more likely to stove heads in with crowbars.

So anyway, I was hiding upstairs, cowering, contemplating the scene that would doubtless unfold: me, having my legs broken with a hammer. Me, having my face cut open with a rusty bread-knife. Me, being tied into a pretzel and hurled bollocks-first from the top floor window by his knuckleheaded cronies. I was utterly convinced that within the hour, I'd find myself being wheeled into the

Sick humour

Aside from the odd pregnancy or broken limb, you won't find any 'conventional' complaints among the *Theme Hospital* patients. That would be boring. Instead, what you get are outlandish maladies which often require equally outlandish remedies. For instance, one of the first diseases you'll successfully diagnose will be 'Bloaty Head' syndrome. As the name suggests, it's a condition in which the patient's head swells to ridiculous proportions (presumably this is caused by working in the media). Not only do these illnesses liven up the visuals – it's always fun when somebody with a new, visible disease enters your hospital – they also open up a whole new can of 'challenge worms'.

To cure 'Bloaty Head', for example, you need to research and build a special 'inflation device', which naturally requires the erection of a whole new clinic. Complete this task, and you're treated to the sight of one of your doctors popping the patients' heads with a pin, then re-inflating the collapsed noggins with the aforementioned machinery.

Each level introduces a fresh slew of these absurd illnesses, each of which poses a unique problem. There's everything from invisible men to incredibly hairy women. My advice is to keep a close eye on how well the research department is faring. Don't say I didn't warn you.





spital!

casualty department of St. Mary's Hospital, fading in and out of consciousness, choking on my own blood and mumbling desperate prayers to a God I didn't even believe in, balancing precariously on the brink of death's precipice.

And then I noticed what was going on outside. At the back of the building was a community centre, which habitually hosted wedding receptions, parties, school discos and the like. It wasn't unusual to hear the muffled thump of loud dance music and the babble of the party crowd throbbing out well into the early hours. But that night, there was something unusual... their choice of music was bizarre to say the least. I could tell the crowd were lapping it up - by the sound of their enthusiastic hoofing, they were dancing in formation - but under the circumstances, I found it unnerving. Deeply unnerving.

Because for some reason they were dancing to the theme tune from *Casualty*.

Bear with me, I'm making a point...

So, *Theme Hospital*. *Theme Hospital* is a sequel, of sorts, to *Theme Park*. It's a 'god game' in which you must build, manage and maintain a successful city hospital. Now, everybody I've mentioned *Theme Hospital* to seems to say the same thing: "Eh? *Theme Hospital*? Can't see how that's going to work..." There seems to be a

In perspective

Theme Hospital is an undeniably superb 'God game'. Here's how we reckon it measures up against some of the competition...

Theme Park

Sim City 2000

Sim Earth

Afterlife

Theme Hospital



consensus of doubt about the game's appeal: after all, its chosen territory conjures up images of endless white corridors, impassive administrators, emaciated patients eking out their last days with only a drip for company, bedpans, blankets and starched white bedsheets. Not exactly a barrel of laughs. Did you ever play *Theme Park*? That had such an air of fun about it. Where's the fun in a bloody hospital simulation, for crying out loud?

Well shut up. You don't know what you're on about. Not only is *Theme Hospital* far far 'wackier' than *Theme Park*, it also pisses over it from a great height in terms of gameplay. If you're harbouring any doubts as to whether hospital management can actually be enjoyable, you can dispel them now. Playfulness and tension go hand in hand in *Theme Hospital*. In this world, both the diseases you'll encounter and the equipment you'll cure them with are surreal and cartoon-like. The colours are bright and snappy, the scenery teems with life. Watching the on-screen hustle and bustle is peculiarly relaxing... except you can't relax for a moment, since you've got a hundred and one decisions to make, all at the same time. Never before have matters of life and death seemed so jolly, and yet simultaneously stressful. Which is why the most accurate description I can come up with is that the experience of playing it is actually rather similar to the experience of hearing a hall full of people cheerily jiggling about to the strains of the *Casualty* theme tune, while nervously harbouring the suspicion that you're about to be thrashed senseless at the same time. Y'see?

Uh... put it there... ooh

Boot up the game and, following the slick intro sequence, you'll find yourself face to face with an empty shell of a hospital. Everything needs to be built from »

Building the perfect hospital ain't easy – there are just so many different things to consider. Hiring and firing, developing new equipment, researching new cures, balancing the books and keeping your plants alive. So much to do, so little time – and so many sick people! Here's a rough guide of what to include...

« scratch and slotted into place – and I'm talking *everything* – from the most expensive piece of cutting-edge medical equipment to the lowliest pot-plant. You get to plan the layout of every single room yourself – and you wouldn't *believe* how *neat* the interface that allows you to do this is. As with *Theme Park*, it's not unlike using a simple paint package. Choose the facility you want to build from the pop-up menu and your cursor is replaced with a little trowel. Click on the floor and a kind of 'instant blueprint' appears. You can drag this out to whatever size you want, place the door wherever you see fit, even pop windows into the walls if you think it needs them. The next stage is deciding which pieces of furniture to use and where to place them, in an orgy of interior decoration that would have the slobbiest, least house-proud philistines on the planet umming and ahing over the positioning of each tiny chair as if it were a matter of global significance. Now, none of this may sound that interesting in print, yet in practice it's so intrinsically *satisfying* to muck around with that you'll find yourself creating new rooms and pissing around with the layout of existing ones (you can go back and re-edit everything if you want) just for the sake of it.

Of course, there's more to efficient room design than being able to decide which corner you'd like to place a pot plant in. As with everything in this game, there are about sixteen zillion other factors to consider. Is the room sufficiently large and well-lit enough to prevent the occupants from feeling claustrophobic and depressed? Is it small enough to leave space for new facilities to be built alongside, or will you need to buy a new plot of land? Have you put radiators and fire extinguishers in place? Is the room easy for patients to find? Do you want to purchase extra equipment and furniture for the room in order to increase efficiency? And so on, and so on, and so on. Once again, none of this



(Left)
Neat things Part 2: RATS & VOM
If you let the rubbish and puke pile up for too long, your hospital will be invaded by filth-ridden rodents. They're obviously unhygienic – but rat infestation does have its lighter moments. Namely, the cursor turns into a crosshair each time you pass over one. If you're a good shot, you can wipe out a nestful within minutes.



Yum. It's the toilet. You wouldn't believe the noises that emanate from here. It sounds a bit like a duck, straining violently as it throws mud-pies at a bloke playing the tuba.



First port of call for any visitor is the reception desk. Place plenty of 'em throughout the corridors and your patients are less likely to get lost and wander around like coughing, bleeding sheep.



This is the first room most patients will find themselves in – a GP's office. The brainier the doc, the more accurate the diagnosis, so try not to hire any drooling, babbling imbeciles. Unless you don't give a fiddler's pluck, that is.



An operating theatre. This is where the knives come out. Try and keep the place clean. It *isn't* a good idea to place a toilet nearby, for instance.



Oh what a lovely ward. When you have absolutely no idea what's wrong with someone – or they require an operation – let them stay in here for a couple of nights while you deal with the situation. And don't forget to charge them a bumload for the privilege.



The more diagnosis rooms you build, the more efficient your diagnoses will be. Like, *duuuuhhh...*



Here they come – ladies and gentlemen, a big hand for the sick and the lame. Now let's bleed the buggers dry...



The more drinks machines you place in your corridors, the more patients will need to use the toilets. And if you fancy increasing sales, turn up the heating a little so that everybody gets thirsty. Heh heh heh.



A staff room. Essential if you want your work force to actually ever get any rest. The more stuff you bung in here, the happier they'll be. Check out the old school *Space Invaders* machine. Cool.



A patient being violently ill all over the floor. Time for a bit of bucket-and-mop action.



Now *there's* an impressive research department. That big machine there performs automatic autopsies on any stiff's you've got lying around. As seen in the *Innovations* catalogue you get free with the Sunday supplements.



A pharmacy, yesterday. What a hotbed of drugs and corruption. Except for the corruption bit.



During an emergency, incoming patients will be dropped at a nearby helipad. Make sure there's a receptionist nearby to tell them where to go.



What's this? The 'rubble therapy' room? Don't be a dumb-bell. It's a piece of medical equipment that's been neglected so long, it's *exploded*. Once this happens, you can't put anything else in its place, so be on the lookout.



The cure for halryitis involves the world's biggest electrolysis machine. You know, the one your mother's booked for next week.

« may sound very enthralling in black and white, but when you're playing it yourself it's all peculiarly compelling.

Got me by detail

As you may have gathered by now, *Theme Hospital* is a game of details. Endless details. So far, I've only mentioned the room design, but that's really the most basic part of the game. There are just so many things to do, so many things to keep your brain occupied. Hiring and firing staff, researching drugs, making sure your caretakers are cleaning up all the piss and vomit, dealing with emergencies and epidemics... I can't even begin to explain how many different elements there are. And since it lets you tinker around with everything, you just can't help getting helplessly immersed within 20 minutes. I defy you not to end up playing it for far, far too long each time you boot it up.

If you're in the slightest bit nosey (and who isn't?), then welcome to heaven. Here's a game in which you can click on a complete stranger and discover their entire medical history. You can watch them getting undressed and being examined. You can tell what mood they're in and whether they need to go to the toilet or not. It makes you feel a bit like an interfering old lady – the sort you overhear at bus stops gossiping about the lady at number 26 who apparently likes 'doing it the greek way' – but it ain't half compelling.

A good hard play

Now, if sales figures are anything to go by, each and every one of you already owns three copies of *Theme Park*. Therefore, you'll be familiar with that

(Right) Neat things Part 3: CHAOS THEORY

In life, even the seemingly insignificant things serve a very real purpose (even Eammon Holmes, who is here to make us question the validity of life itself). In *Theme Hospital*, the same rules apply. Take pot-plants for example: they may be small, but they perform a variety of functions. They purify the air (which makes things more hygienic), and they cheer people up (which enhances your reputation among the patients, and means the staff are less likely to demand a raise). However, they will need regular watering from a caretaker. And don't put them too close to the radiators or they'll start to wilt (which depresses everyone)...

(Below right) By the way, did we mention that the intro and cut scenes are all brilliant and that you can also play over a network?

Up yours, Florence!

In the same way that its predecessor revealed *Theme Parks* to be little more than cynical money-making engines, *Theme Hospital* tackles the medical profession with a barely-disguised air of gleeful subversion. Keeping patients alive is encouraged, but mainly because it harms your reputation – and therefore your income – if they start dropping dead in the corridors (which happens right before your eyes, by the way). There are times when it pays to have the clinical business acumen of a Bill Gates, and the human compassion of a Genghis Khan. For example, let's say you've just discovered a new contagious illness. You examine the patient and get the research department to work out a remedy. Yours is now the only hospital in the area that can cure patients with this particular disease. So what do you do? If you're really smart, you'll deliberately refer some of the sufferers to rival hospitals in the area. Not only does this cause your computerised opponents a bit of a managerial headache, it has the added side-effect of creating a whole new posse of patients, as the infected party wanders around, innocently spilling germs this way and that. And more patients means more money. For you.

That's just an example. There's a myriad of different money-making schemes. You'll have to discover the best ones yourself.



Raspberry Parade

Theme Hospital's visuals are so crisp and neat, you could cut your finger on 'em.

What's more, they're incredibly busy. Absolutely every action each character could conceivably perform seems to have been animated. You can watch people typing on keyboards or using vending machines. Surgeons wash their hands and adjust the lighting prior to an operation. Caretakers sit on their arses, watching the staff room telly while the rubbish piles up in the corridors. You can even see people straining as they try to pass a particularly unforgiving stool in the lavatory.

The sound effects are equally elaborate. You can hear everything. And I mean everything. You can tell if the people straining in the toilet are doing 'number ones' or 'number twos', thanks to the telltale 'splosh' sound of the occasional turd hitting the water. None of the patients seem to do the old 'bung a layer of sound-deadening bog roll onto the water surface' trick – they just don't care who hears their embarrassing noises. Perhaps they've noticed that the hospital doesn't actually have a roof, so it doesn't seem to matter.



game's main failing: it climaxes too soon. It starts off like an over-enthusiastic teenager, desperately trying to impress you with its looks and its user-friendliness, hammering away at your pleasure receptors as fast as it can until all of a sudden you realise that it's fired off all its surprises in one go, and there's nothing left to keep you occupied. It always gives you the option of going back for more (by starting a new park), but deep down you know it's just going to be more of the same. Interest wanes, you withdraw, and before long you've begun to salaciously eye up the other, perkier games on the market.

Theme Hospital, on the other hand, is a considerably more assured and sophisticated lover. It has far more interesting tricks up its sleeve, and is mature enough not to play them too early. In the early stages it soothes and arouses you with relaxing, involving gameplay and quirky little touches. As you grow in confidence together, it pulls off altogether bolder strokes, continually maintaining your interest with increasingly inventive moves. Then the pace begins to quicken and you lose yourself completely. Entirely at its mercy, the best you can do is try to keep up, as it plunges challenge after challenge after

challenge deep into your brain, with relentless zeal, working towards a climax. Just as you've reached the peak, when all the demands of a particular level have been satisfied, and you're sitting back, serenely watching the 'congratulations' screen with a slow-burning cigarette in your hand, it rolls over and starts doing it again, presenting you with another blank hospital, and a whole new range of tasks to complete. And you know that it's going to be just as much fun as it was last time, only even more intense. Frankly, by the time you reach the final levels, it's grabbing the back of your head with both hands, balancing on its elbows, and repeatedly ramming its fearsome girth into you like some kind of demented jackhammer, while you clutch the headboard and wail with pleasure.

Now, how can you say 'no' to an offer like that, eh? **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: 486DX2/66 (Pentium recommended)

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: SoundBlaster and compatibles

Controls: Mouse, keyboard

Score

91

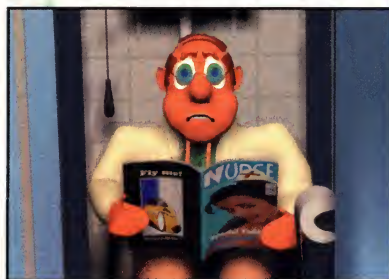
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Price: £44.99 Release date: March

Publisher: Electronic Arts

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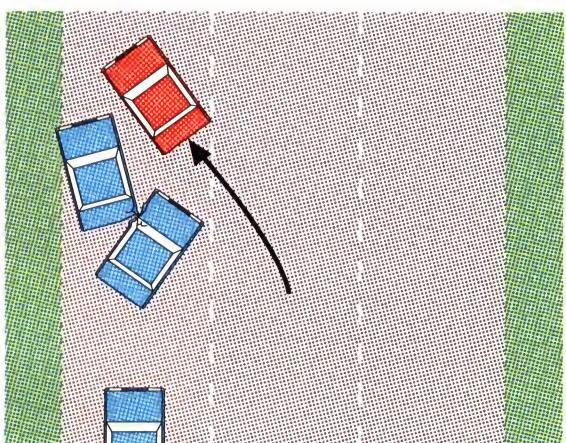
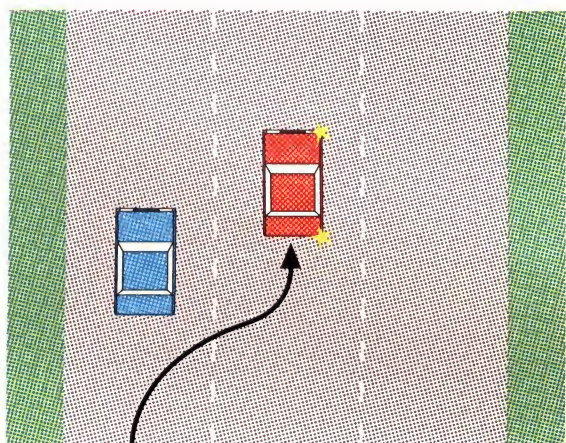
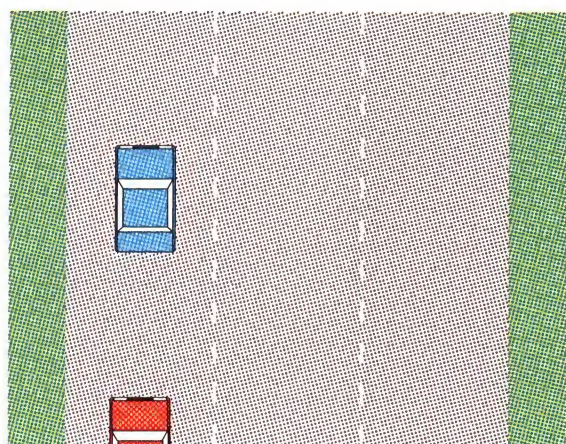
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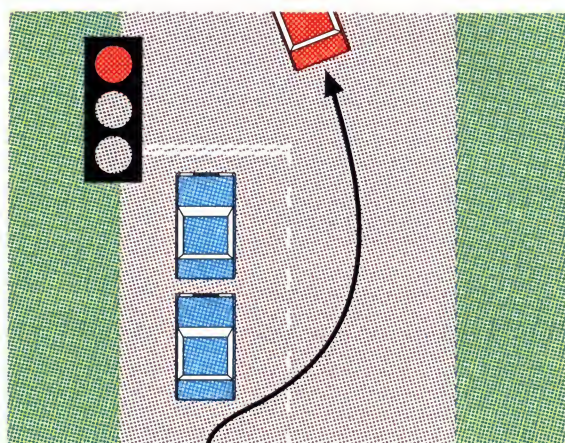
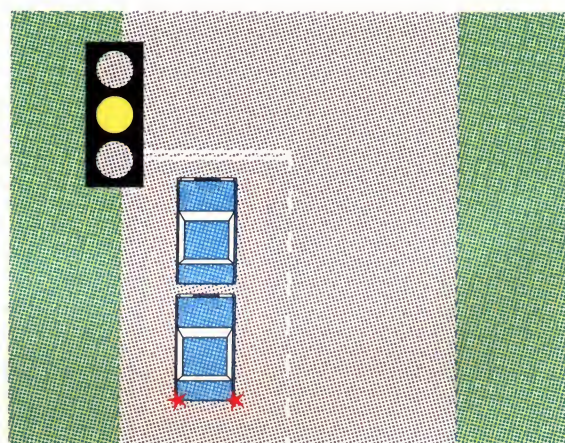
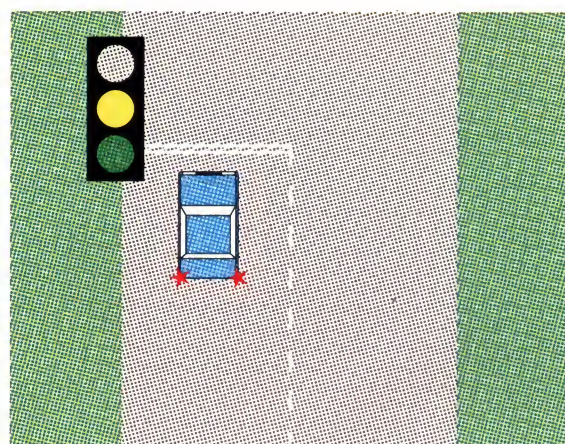
Name: NITRO RACERS™ Format: PC
Style: Top down, smash 'em up racing
Graphics: 1200 frame animation
Features: 30 different race tracks, upgradeable cars and pit crews, octoplay
Author: Studio 3DO, <http://www.3do.com>
When: Now Where: Anywhere good

3.7 Overtaking



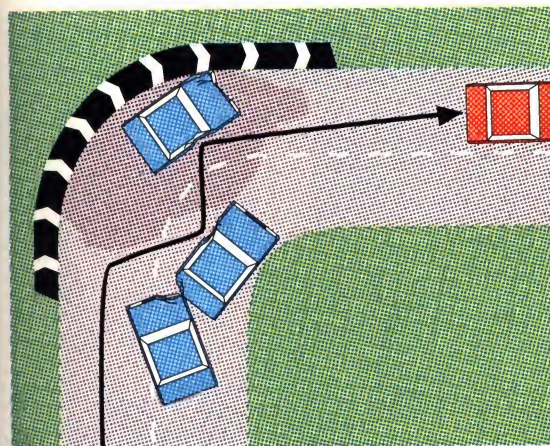
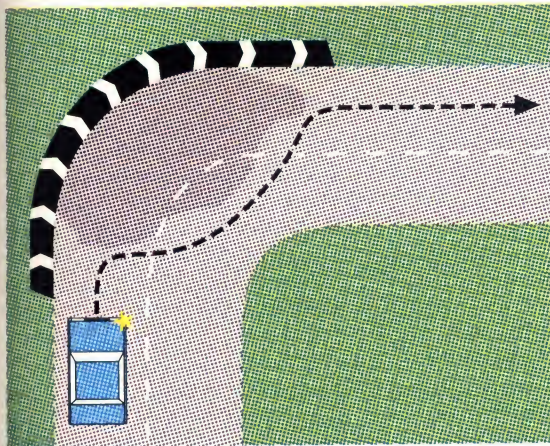
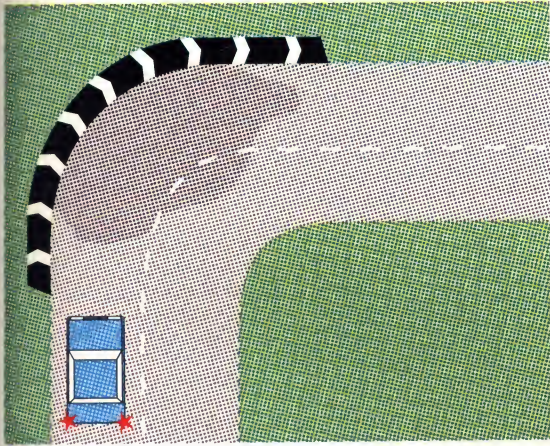
- Lane discipline is nonsense - you pay your road tax, use all the lanes.
- Do not overtake unless you can cause serious damage to other vehicles.
- Once you have started to overtake, quickly swerve back in front of the vehicle you are overtaking.
- **If in doubt - OVERTAKE**

5.2 Traffic Signals



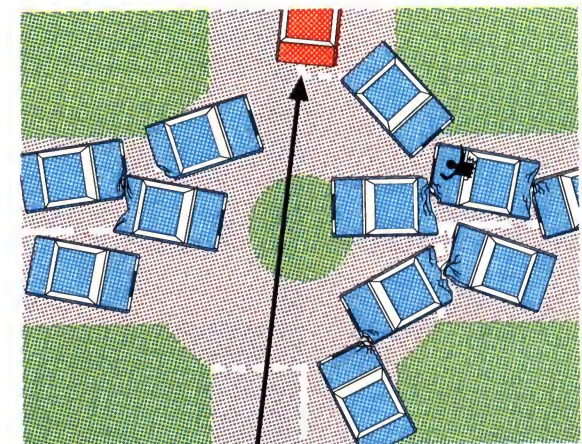
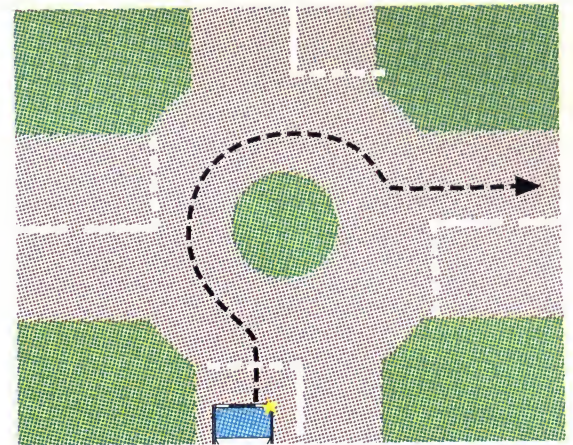
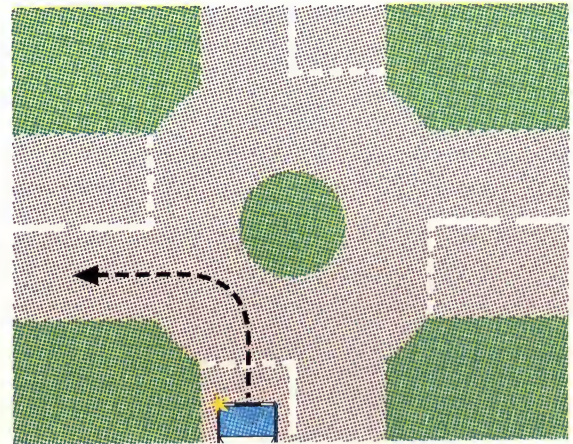
- Lights are for Christmas trees.

9.4 Hazardous Surfaces



- Ice can be dangerous, your steering may be affected.
- Should you find yourself skidding, position your vehicle in the path of oncoming vehicles.
- Use your brakes sparingly.
- **Remember - mirror - signal - manoeuvre - IMPACT**

12.0 Approaching Roundabouts



- On approaching a roundabout, decide as early as possible which lane you need to take in order to create the most carnage.
- Increase speed, this is good for your adrenalin build-up.
- Show no consideration for other road users, especially those on horseback.
- Hone these skills. Prepare for Nitro Racers™

Magic: The Gathering



In a way, Paul Presley is kind of glad that the long-awaited card game conversion is finally here. Now the taunts of "Oi, Mr. Wizard!", "Cast any spells lately?" and other gibes can stop. Oh for a game with guns in...



YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE ME IF THIS review tends to get a bit bizarre in places. If sentences suddenly end for no reason or I start drifting off on precarious tangents, then please just bear with me and hopefully we'll get through to the end in one piece. The reason for this is that I'm still slightly in shock. You see, it's actually here. I've got the manual in my hand. The shiny disc is sitting right over there, in my CD-ROM tray. *Magic: The Gathering* is actually, finally, here. And I still can't quite believe it. It's been a long journey. Many, many, many phone calls to MicroProse. More pre-release screenshots and rolling, if unstable, demos than I've had hot dinners. Even a so-called world exclusive review in another magazine that somehow managed to get hold of a finished, playable version almost half a year before the programmers had even finished writing it.

(Above) Each duel is played for an ante of random cards from your deck. So even if you've spent months trying to find that one special card, you could still end up losing it to the blind chances of fate.

(Above right) The Deck Builder is an entire database of every basic *Magic* card available. You can even give each new deck a silly name, like Prezzer's Mystical Magical Wibbly Wobbly Deck. You know, if you wanted to.

(Right) Fighting in *Magic* duels always takes place with the creatures you summon.



Standard duelling

The game covers the three basic aspects of playing *Magic*: deck construction, card trading and the actual duelling. Rather than just present them as a straight conversion though, they've all been entwined into a larger story-line about powerful wizards, an ultimate spell of power and a land being conquered. You play the part of a young spellcaster, roaming the land of Shandalar (sounds like a caravan site in North Wales), trying to build up your collection of spell cards in order to defeat the evil forces at work. The actual duelling side of things is pretty much a straight conversion of the card game, but the overall idea works quite nicely.

You can just play standalone duels though and this is essentially the core of the whole product. It's akin to a chess simulator (you know, that game with the pawns, the bishops and the horsies). There are a large number of



The basics of Magic

A single deck of *Magic* cards contains any number of spells you care to choose from. Although the computerised version lets you build decks out of every available card in the basic sets, in real life you have to continually add to your initial collection by buying booster packs of up to 12 random cards at a time. Either that or you can find other *Magic* players and trade cards with them much in the same way that you used to do with Panini football stickers.

The basic game of *Magic* requires you to build up reservoirs of magical energy by playing 'land' cards and with them, cast powerful spells with which to defeat your opponent. Spells can take the form of creatures with different strengths and abilities that can be sent off to attack your enemy's forces, spells of conflict like Fireballs and Lightning Bolts that attack your opponent directly and more subtle effects that try to shape the course of each game to your advantage.

Ideally, each game you play is enhanced by an ante – a random card from your deck that goes to the winner of each duel. This way you can build up your collection of cards by playing well and mastering the game and gives the whole enterprise that kind of *Highlander* feel – you wander through your life, occasionally meeting other players whom you challenge to a duel until only one person in the world owns every card. In reality you tend to just skip the ante and play against your mates or meet up at semi-regular conventions when it's a bank holiday, while spending your hard-earned cash on more packs. Still, it's a romantic idea. The *Highlander* bit, that is.

pre-built decks to play with if your own construction skills are somewhat less than that of an Irish brickie, or you can use the Deck Construction tools to start designing your own 'killer decks' (as aficionados call them to sound hard).

This is one of the main areas where MicroProse have managed to score points over the original card game. You're given every card in the basic game to play with, plus over 20 rare ones (one of which is worth over £250 in the real world) and a dozen cards specially created for the computer game alone. To get this many cards in real life would take a great deal of both time and money. So having instant access to

(Above right) Each deck in a duel must have a minimum of 40 cards. There's no maximum limit but the more you take in, the less chance you'll draw the cards you need.

In perspective

Magic is somewhat unique when it comes to computer games. However, different elements within the game can be compared to various other titles. Consequently, there's a slightly different look to this 'In perspective' box.

As a simulator:

Magic: The Gathering

Chessmaster 4000 Turbo

As a game conversion:

Magic: The Gathering

Battleship

As a *Magic: The Gathering* title:

Magic: The Gathering

Magic: The Gathering - BattleMage

(Right) Obviously no one expects you to remember every card's strengths and weaknesses, so running the mouse over a card's artwork on the left-hand side of the screen.



all of them lets you get to play with 'dream' decks right from the start.

Of course all this wouldn't mean a thing if the computer didn't play a decent game. Luckily, like all good chess simulators, the AI is pretty smart. You have five levels to play against, but these are combined with an almost unlimited combination of cards and mean that each individual duel is challenging and different enough to have the kind of long-term appeal that TV soap operas can only dream about. There are noticeable differences too. At the lower levels the computer will make mistakes (although you'll only really know this if you're a pretty experienced Duellist yourself). It will miss obvious card combinations, not make full use of every special ability on offer and occasionally leave gaps in its defences. At the other end of the scale, the expert settings know just about every possible way of using the cards in its deck, have plans for all sorts of different eventualities and basically slaughter you in minutes.

Campaign play

The campaign game has been designed to introduce newcomers to the elements of *Magic* by simulating what life for the typical collector is like when they start (the only difference being that it all takes place in a magical world under the threat of destruction as opposed to the bedrooms, schoolyards and tiny little gaming shops that make up the real world). Your wandering magician starts with just a handful of basic cards and has to explore Shandalar – building up his library by duelling enemy creatures, trading in cities and villages and exploring dungeons and castles.

Ultimately you have to become powerful enough to defeat the five evil wizards who are all – as per usual in most games – desperate to gain control over the whole world. Each wizard corresponds to one of the basic colours of *Magic* and everything in the world reflects one colour or another – for example, monsters, castles and treasures belonging to the green wizard tend to hang around in forests.





“ I have to say at this point that I’m somewhat in two minds regarding how effective this side of the game is. On the one hand you’ve got a well thought-out representation of *Magic* life, with an engaging plot and plenty of nice ideas. On the other, well, it just seems to be a little basic. The presentation style is somewhat more primitive than I was expecting and I can’t help but shake

(Above) Each town and village has pretty much the same options open to you. Food to keep you moving, cards to buy and sell, women to rape and plunder...

(Above right) To stop you getting cocky, *Magic* keeps a constant record of all your battles.



the feeling that the myriad of delays combined with the constant public demand that affected the game’s release led to a sort of “Look, let’s just try and get it out as quickly as we possibly can” attitude. Don’t get me wrong, it works. It’s perfectly playable, enjoyable and I’d heartily recommend it. It’s just that, well, you know. Rushed. The look of the game seems... rushed.

Constructive criticism

Other than that minor (and admittedly superficial) complaint, *Magic: The Gathering* has done everything it should have and has done it well. It works on every level, from first-time player (thanks to the superb FMV tutorial that takes you through the game) to experienced deck construction techniques for hardcore duellists.

The unfortunate delays have sadly meant that it’s a single player game only. The much heralded multi-player networking and Internet options won’t see the light of day for some time yet. Future enhancements will come in three waves. First up will be add-on disks for this version that mirror the various expansion packs you can get in real life. Next up will come a complete update that allows you to participate in network and Internet duels (available as

an upgrade for owners of this version) and finally MicroProse are planning an entire on-line *Magic* environment (à la Diablo’s *BattleNet*) that allows you to build up territory and the like.

For now though, this game is a totally worthwhile purchase for hardened *Magic* fans and newcomers to the game alike, and I’m happy to say that it’s actually been worth the wait. To be honest, I can see the standalone duelling part of the game getting more use than the main campaign as it’s one of those things that you can just load up during a quick 20-minute break during work, have a quick duel, and then turn off again. Well, it’s what I keep doing anyway. **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 16Mb
Processor: 486DX/100
Graphics: VGA/SVGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Mouse

Score

92

It’s what you’ve been waiting for all along.

Price: £44.99 **Release date:** Out now
Publisher: MicroProse
Tel: 01454 893893

dan The People’s Choice
Personal Computers

Look & learn



To ease newcomers into the world of *Magic*, two powerful wizards (read: out of work actors) take you through a series of FMV tutorials, gently introducing each different element of the game and building up a will-they/won’t-they sexual tension.



As they explain, you can interact with the surroundings to get a feel for what’s going on.



There are 13 chapters in all and, naturally, the woman wins. Bitch.

(Below) Being a Windows 95 game, accidentally pressing F1 summons up the maze of help menus within the game. Luckily they’re actually useful here for beginners to understand each card’s powers individually.





Scorchers[™]

**PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS
CAREFULLY BEFORE USE**

USE FOR WOOD, PAPER FABRICS ETC.

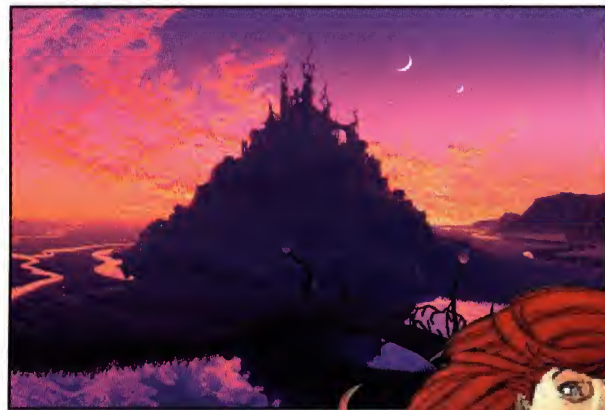
DO NOT USE ON ELECTRICAL OR FLAMMABLE LIQUID FIRES.

Magic: The Gathering – BattleMage

And yet more card-dealing shenanigans. This month's episode sees **Paul Presley** returning from an epic battle across a magical land, only to realise that he'd forgotten to cancel the milk and turn off the electricity... Cue hilarious results.

SURELY YOU DON'T REALLY NEED YET another explanation about what *Magic: The Gathering* is about, do you? No, you should have picked up the basics by now, so all that remains for me to do here is tell you what a good job Acclaim have done in transferring the card game into the world of binary on-off switches. Let's make a quiz of it to try and build up the tension. Choose one of the following three answers:

1. It's the Best Thing Ever™
2. It was a good idea on paper but it hasn't worked in practice
3. It's a cookery book.



Our survey said...

If you thought the answer was 1, then you're wrong, so very wrong. If you said 2, you're spot on. Well done. Have some blancmange and Twiglets. If you reckoned it was 3, you're just being silly, and since you don't seem to really care about the game, kindly turn the page and stop wasting our time and yours.



(Above) So, what part of our body shall we use this spell on then?

(Above right) The creatures of the *Magic* world take a temporary break from the action and enjoy a nice day out by the beach.

(Below) I'll bet that's a fun place to hold a party.

BattleMage is sadly one of those ideas that makes you think, "Wow, that sounds really smart", but in reality falls just short of its target (like *Last Chance Lottery*, don't you think?). The premise is that you take the game of *Magic*, translate all the existing cards and their effects, add the typical world-conquering fantasy storyline and then show everything visually. Which is a great idea. What would you rather see when you cast a fireball? A few lines of text saying, "You cast a fireball – your opponent loses three lifepoints". Or a huge screaming ball of flame hurtling out of your fingertips and smashing into your enemy's chest, searing his flesh and removing his eyebrows? Well exactly.

Unfortunately, although that was the idea, something has been lost in the translation. The problem is that while that's all well and good for fireballs, not every card in the game of *Magic* is represented so easily by visuals. Plus a lot of cards are specifically designed to work within the turn-based environment in which the card game operates (in fact, the basic premise of casting and storing magical energy is entirely turn-based). As soon as you throw in a real-time aspect to the game (à la *Command & Conquer*), you're piling problem on top of problem.

Now I'm sure that somewhere someone has developed a solution to these problems. Trouble is,



it isn't apparently anyone at Acclaim. What you have is a combat system which requires the player to recognise every card in his deck and all their respective abilities, spell effects and casting costs – all of this from the card's artwork alone – and considering that every deck must have a minimum of 40 cards, that's no mean feat, even for experienced *Magic* players. But that's not all: you also need the reflexes of a whippet if you're to try and manage your on-screen troops and fend off attacks from your opponent.

Ten out of ten for effort, but...

It was a noble effort. Really. Presentation-wise you can't fault it. Graphically, too, it's very impressive, with a great intro sequence that offers one of the best explanations I've ever seen. The campaign features are well worked out and are enjoyable to play (putting me in mind of *Defender Of The Crown* back on the Amiga). It's just that the core of the game is so terribly flawed. Such a shame. It could have been the perfect way to entice newcomers to the card game. As it is, newcomers are more likely to be put off for life. **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P75

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All major digital cards

Controls: Mouse, keyboard

Score

65

Nice idea but badly implemented. Shame.

Price: £39.99 Release date: Out now

Publisher: Acclaim

Tel: 0171 344 5000

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WINDOWS 95
& DOS 5.0

Die Hard Trilogy

Patrick McCarthy looks ridiculous in a vest. This makes him the ideal person... etc, etc...



MOST SUPPOSEDLY TENSION-relieving devices actually rarely do what they claim: sit bursting a sheet of bubble-wrap and you can find yourself getting more and more pent-up, as the need to shred every single one becomes an obsession, and the release in bursting them proves to be inadequate. It's the same with those bizarre odd-shaped rubber squeeze things – you just get really tense, as you squeeze and squeeze, until so many veins are standing out in your forehead it looks like a three-dimensional model of the Amazon basin.

On the other hand, taking a pretend gun and shooting the crap out of

(Above) Another hard day at the office for Brucey. Glad to see the bald patch has cleared up nicely.

(Below) Welcome to planet carnage. You can shoot just about anything and it'll blow up or turn into gore.



thousands of pretend baddies is a cathartic experience that could only be matched by stacking Noel Edmonds, Jim Davidson and Richard Madeley horizontally on top of each other and stamping the face of each one into the head of the one beneath.

Die Hard

Die Hard Trilogy, much-loved on the PlayStation, offers you three potentially cathartic experiences. *Die Hard* is a third-person viewed shoot 'em up. Just like in the film, you're trapped in an office block in a grimy vest, with a bunch of foreigners who plan to steal millions of dollars from the security vaults while pretending to be terrorists. Unlike the film, there are approximately six million of them, you have limitless ammunition, and you have to work through one of the 20-odd levels at a

time. Basically, you shoot every terrorist on each level and try to free all the hostages, who then make their way to the exit. Each one that gets out alive brings bonus points; shooting them because you don't like the way they walk loses you points. Once everyone's accounted for, the bomb on each level counts down and you have 30 seconds to remember where the exit is before the bomb goes off. Given that many of the levels are extremely complicated, and there are often a number of possible exits, this can be frustrating.

To help you, there's a small radar view. Each level also has a number of power-ups: larger guns; stun-, smoke- and high-explosive grenades; protective clothing and various foodstuffs (which provoke a burp that sound like there's a bull sea-lion in the room). There are bonus levels, where you have, for example, to dash about on the roof, escorting hostages to a helicopter. There are also bonuses on normal levels, such as if you manage to take out a terrorist using a human shield without harming the shield, you'll get a bonus life.

The terrorists can be intelligent, splitting up to enter a room by two different doors. But they also don't 'see' you if you hide, or they're facing another direction, so there's room for a bit of tactics. Mostly you'll find yourself hiding behind scenery, and popping out to shoot people in the back of the head. Of the three games, this looks least like the PSX version: for some reason, you can't seem to see as far ahead of you as you can in the original – obviously something of a handicap in a game of this sort. This is difficult to explain. It may just be me. But I went back and checked the PSX version and it definitely seemed more 'roomy'.

Die Harder

The second game takes the form of a first-person viewed shoot 'em up on rails, à la *Virtua Cop*. Except unlike in most games of this sort, you can shoot anything and bits fly off it or it explodes





- from the cop cruisers in the airport carpark, to the shop frontages around the check-in area, to the bits sticking out of the runway buildings - everything that's there can be shot. That goes for people, too - terrorists are fair game, of course, but cops and passing tourists aren't. But let's face it, if you're stuck behind a counter with a gunman who keeps jumping up to take pot-shots at trigger-happy McClane, and you're stupid enough to alternate with him by jumping up, waving your arms and shouting, you deserve to die. Who'd want your genes anyway? I don't know why that nice Mr McClane even bothers to shout an apologetic, "Sorry, pal..."

Again, there are power-ups: shoot the right stuff and you'll be unleashing terrible devastation with 'explosive shotguns', rocket launchers and any number of machineguns. You could certainly argue that there are elements which are too over the top, though. Shoot someone from close-up and they disappear completely in an explosion of blood. It's supposed to be cartoon violence, but the game's so obviously set in the real world that it might be a little unsettling for some. At least in *Virtua Cop* they content themselves with having polygons slumping to the floor. If none of this bothers you, though, you'll find it probably ranks highest on the release-of-tensionometer.

Die Hard With A Vengeance

The third game throws logic aside and has you taking to the streets in a series of automobiles for an interesting new take on the driving game. Basically, you're in a race against time, and you'll



find yourself screaming round the streets like a Post Office delivery driver, 'de-fusing' bombs by running over them so that they... well, explode. (I don't think you're supposed to think too much about this bit.) As you hurtle about, following the on-screen indicators to each bomb's location, you'll invariably run pedestrians over (there seems to be a high suicide rate in this city) and again, there's a dubiously humorous element of windscreen wipers removing the gore from your car every time a bystander gets launched skywards from the bonnet. And again, there are power-ups: turbo boosts, extra time icons, launcher icons (for spectacular jumping short-cuts, and so on). The car handles well once you're used to the extra buttons presses for 90 degrees and 180 degrees turns, and it's very fast paced - especially the car-chase bits.

In fact the whole package is pretty good: as long as you have a 3D accelerator card. Without one, you have the choice of reasonable-looking graphics moving at the speed of a holiday slide show, or fast-moving graphics that look like a test for colour-blindness (except that it's harder to pick out the figures).

Die Hard is probably the weakest of the three, but is still playable enough. And while each is also repetitive in itself, you can switch between styles of gameplay when you're bored. Even as a standalone *Virtua Cop*-style shooter, *Die Harder* would be the best on the PC. And *Die Hard With A Vengeance*, despite its absurd premise, isn't bad. So if you can live with the gore, and you have a 3D card, get out there and start releasing some tension. **Z**



(Above and right) You'll need a 3D accelerator card to get graphics that are bearable, otherwise it's chug city, here we come.



Tech specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: Pentium 120

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: SoundBlaster and 100% compatibles

Controls: Mouse, keyboard

Note: DirectX/3D accelerator cards supported

Score

82

Better than bursting bubble wrap...

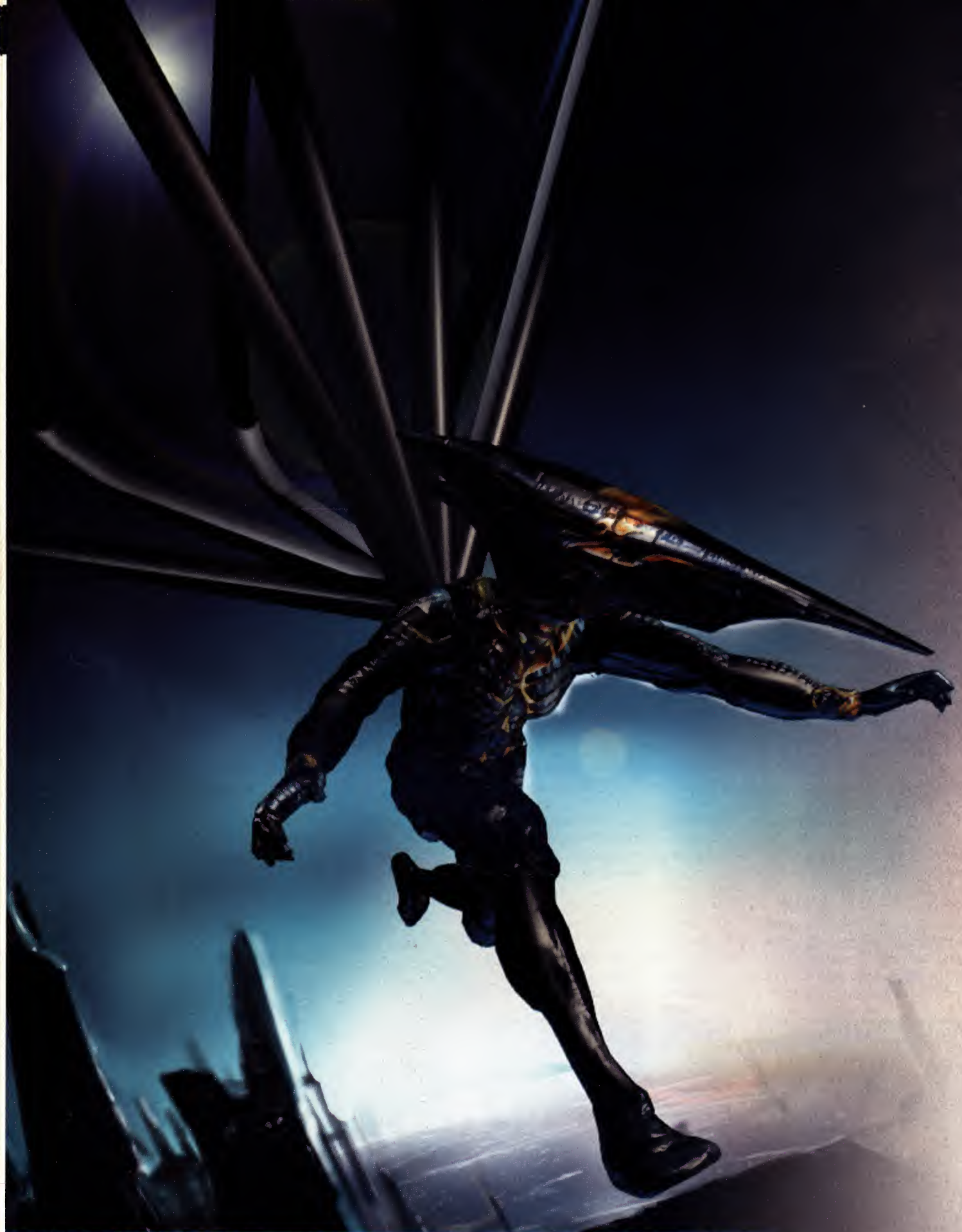
Price: £39.99 Release date: Out now

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Tel: 01753 549442

dan The People's Choice
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(Left) It's three games in one, innit? Except that the *Diehard* bit isn't actually that good - well it's not a patch on *Tomb Raider*. That said, the package as a whole represents good value for money - the *Die Harder* bit is much better than *Virtua Cop* and the driving bit (*Die Hard With A Vengeance*) makes a nice change to the usual smash and bash stuff.



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Pod



Patrick McCarthy was warned that we wanted him to review a game called *Pod*, but he thought it was based on the old children's TV programme and we still haven't managed to get him out of the foetal position. Nurse! The syringe please...

(Bottom) An extremely large spider does something amusing in the background.

(Below) Why they give the cars brake lights in anyone's guess.

(Below right) Suddenly the racing game turned into a flight sim...

Q KAY, HERE'S THE DEAL: PLANET IO was colonised and quickly settled down into a near-idyllic existence: everyone had a nice place to live; everyone had a job; drunken businessmen singing along to Oasis records in pubs were punished by public hanging; and so on. Then, suddenly (you knew this was coming, didn't you?) everything went horribly

wrong when a terrifying virus called Pod appeared. (Its real name was actually much longer and more scientific-sounding – podpokypola virus, perhaps – but nobody who had it ever lived long enough to pronounce it in its entirety. It was,

awaited their turn to be evacuated. It was down to the last spaceship. The queue was round the block. And there was only one seat left. Oh dear... The people with the cars decided they'd have a series of races, and the champion would get the last seat. And you are one of those racers.

Sunglasses at the ready

There's a lot to talk about here, but let's start with the graphics.

As you can see from the screenshots, the



"Aiieeee! I've got Pod...!" Or just, "I... Pod...!" Cue skies going funny colours, buildings dissolving in foul-smelling pools, and people running about waving their arms and shouting, "It's eating everything in its paaaa-aath!" With the entire planet turning into a big blob of Pod, it was mass evacuation time.

Everyone bundled aboard great big spaceships and bugged off. The cities emptied fast. Some weirdos amused themselves by racing about in cars they'd built from junk while they

game looks absolutely amazing; there

are solar flares as you drive into the sun, light-sourced reflections of your car on polished surfaces, smoking tyres and even skidmarks that remain intact for the duration of the race. You get N64-style true perspective, too – there's none of this bits-of-track-popping-up-from-nowhere malarkey.

The graphical wonderment is because it's been designed specifically for 3dfx



Picture this

Ubisoft have stressed that if the gameplay isn't right, they don't give a shit about graphics, to which end they've worked very hard on making it fast and playable. Both accelerated versions ran very quickly on a P200 and P100. If you've taken the advice we doled out last issue and not yet committed yourself to an accelerator card, there's also a straight Pentium version. Obviously, it doesn't have all the snazzy effects, but it still looks pretty good. However, you'll need at least a P120 to run it. If you have a 3Dfx card, it will supposedly run happily on something as slow as a P60 – but we haven't yet had the opportunity to see if this claim holds water.



cards – but there's also a version for Intel's new 3D accelerator chip, MMX. (Ubisoft had help from Intel's boffins while making the game, and it's the first title to appear that supports the new chip). And there's a straight Pentium version, or Pod Ordinaire. (See the piccies above/left/right/opposite.)

Driving in my car

The graphics could be as fancy as you like, but let's face it, if the racing's crap you've just got another *Megarace* on your hands. (Except *Megarace* doesn't look this good.) Fortunately, it really shifts, the tracks are great and the cars handle really well.

Ubisoft say they wanted something with the car-handling parameters calculated to the accuracy of *F1GP2*, but with the ease of use of *Sega Rally*. So there are 20 technical parameters, controlled by just five ratings: speed, acceleration, grip, handling and brakes. All cars have default settings, but you can customise them by distributing your allocation of 300 points among the five ratings until you get a set-up you like. There's even a handy test-track with banked sides and jumps to try the car on as you work. There go all your excuses for sliding sideways into the game's version of Mothercare at 150mph...

The other car's drivers have different personalities, and drive accordingly – some are incredibly aggressive, whereas others are so mild-mannered you have to reverse over their throat before they're even slightly tetchy. The 16 tracks are excellent, spanning relatively simple affairs through to tortuous courses with alternative routes, short-cuts, secret areas and car-repair areas, and even some bits you can't access until you're at a certain level of difficulty. You can save time in some bits, and helplessly lose precious minutes if you get it wrong. The cars can also be damaged by your appalling driving – either overall, or by sectors, so that the bits that get whacked affect how the car performs. Nothing flies off though, *Destruction Derby*-style.



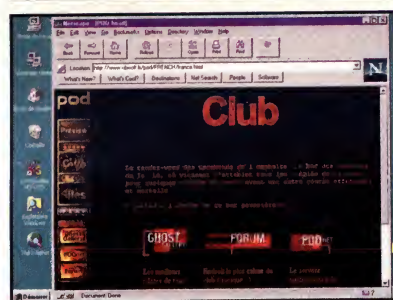
The futures market

The designers want to set up a cultural thing similar to that surrounding *Quake* in order to maintain people's long-term interest. The idea is that just buying the game is a starting point: every month on Ubisoft's *Pod* site there'll be four new custom cars, plus extra tracks to download. You'll be able to post your best times for each course, and download other people's "ghost cars" to race against. And you might be able to win extra points by competing against other people, which you can add to the 300 maximum for your car set-up.

To minimise Net-lag, they're creating free corporate servers in each of their territories – France, Germany, UK etc – which you'll be able to use for the cost of a local call. For the future there's even talk of adding all sorts of new features via Internet-only patches – including weapons, which will enable them to produce a kind of 'Quake in cars' (they could call it "Old Kent Road"). Like iD did with *Quake*, they'll also be releasing the source code, so you'll be able to go mental, adding whatever you want to it. Blimey.



(Above) One track even has a parking area with a built-in *Trivial Pursuit* board.



(Left) I don't know what "Club" has to do with anything, to be honest. But below that you can see a pretty map.



(Below) The days of nice soft bumper areas seem to be behind us.

Get yourself connected

A bonus is that *Pod* will work with any form of connectivity for multi-player games in any combination. You can have up to eight people racing, with people playing in split-screen view on one machine, linked by LAN to others, with yet more people on a modem link – the first time this has ever been possible in a game. I suppose I should say there are all the usual options for one-off games, customised championships and the official championship that will get you the seat on the spaceship (assuming someone hasn't offered a simple bribe to the air hostess while you've been messing about in your car).

But the multi-player options (see "The futures market" panel above) are the icing on the cake – if they do everything they say they will, *Pod* will be amazing. As it is, it's one of the best arcade racers on the PC. **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P60 (3Dfx, MMX accelerated), P120 (normal)

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All Windows 95 sound cards; Dolby™ Surround Sound supported

Controls: Keyboard, joystick, joypad, wheel

Note: Win95 only; 3Dfx/MMX supported

Score

90

Great graphics, great gameplay, great... er... pods.

Price: £44.99 **Release date:** Out now

Publisher: Ubisoft

Tel: 0181 941 4004

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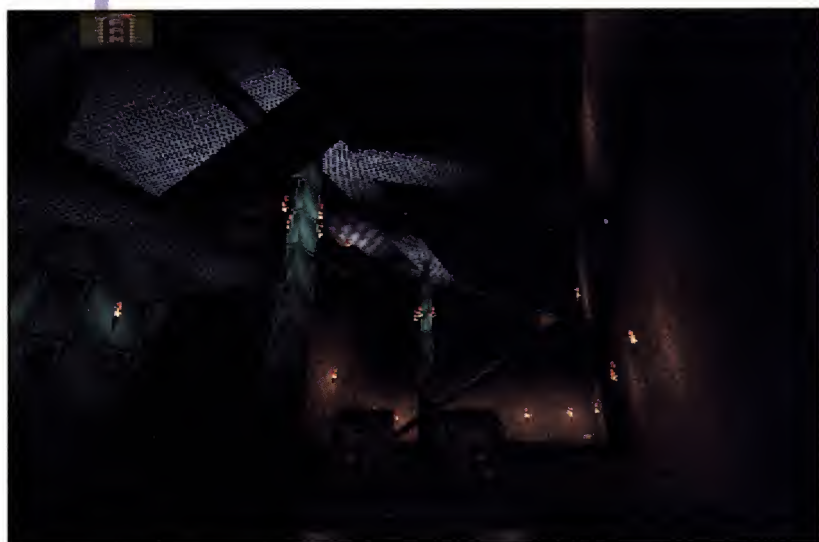
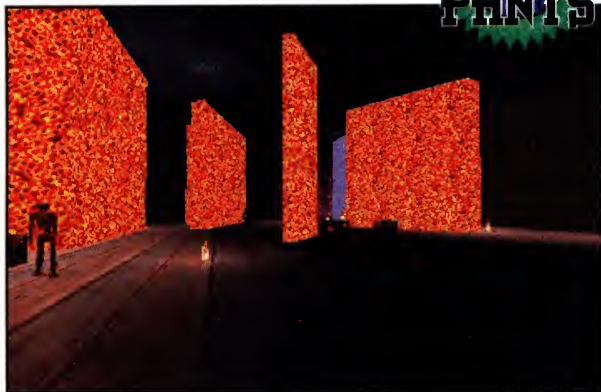
More Quake!

Hmmm, look. Lots of new pricey add-ons for *Quake*. "But aren't those available on the Internet and on coverdisks?" we hear you bleat. Indeed, but these are retail packs. Nicely warmed-up and melted into the surface of glistening silver CDs which you then exchange for large amounts of your local currency. Some are sanctioned by iD Software. Some are not. The latter are tagged 'unofficial' and have to use new textures on the walls as the existing images are copyright. Some are really, really bad: cheap cash-ins exploiting the *Quake*-struck public. Others are really, really good and well worth investing in. Allow your *Quake* Laureate, **David McCandless**, to dip into the selection and show you a few...

THE DARK HOUR

DESPITE A NICE WINDOWS 95 FRONT end - bearded General-type details 'plot' to grizzled marine type while spinny 3D logo spins and explodes in the background - *The Dark Hour* is unreservedly pants. A dour cash-in. What you get for your money are 23 levels. Eight are deathmatch only, the rest are dual purpose. Annoyingly, the levels stand alone - they're not combined into a continuous episode. So each one has to be launched from the front-end which, if you're a little short on RAM, can be tedious and affect the frame rate of your *Quake*.

This wouldn't be too much to bear if the levels were any cop. But they're not. The new textures are really bad - horribly garish and badly-drawn in equal measures. The levels are often over-packed with monsters, poorly



paced, and vomit-inducingly designed. There are a couple of nice deathmatch playing fields on there - notably ARENAM - but there are a few nice deathmatch levels on the Internet and this month's coverdisk. To add insult to injury, MicroForum have padded out the CD with a list of cool *Quake* Web and clan sites. Woo. A text file.

Price: £TBC
Release date: Out now
Publisher: MicroForum
Internet: www.microforum.com

Save your pennies. It's rubbish.
SCORE: 20%

AFTERSHOCK

THIS IS MUCH BETTER. AFTERSHOCK presents much more value for your readies - 80 deathmatch arenas and 15 new single-player levels, all designed and artworked by Good People Who Know What They Are Doing. The result is a suave, playable, enjoyable add-on for *Quake*, with gorgeous thrills to be reaped from levels such as Hell Hole, DeathWalk, The Surface, and The Adobe. They're all seamlessly grouped together as one episode, with a new start room and, unlike *The Dark Hour*, gameplay is balanced (although all are very hard) and the textures are acceptably good-looking.

The only blip really is the size of some of the environments - huge enough to show the turtle on slower systems. Also squidged on the CD is the level editor formally known as Thred,

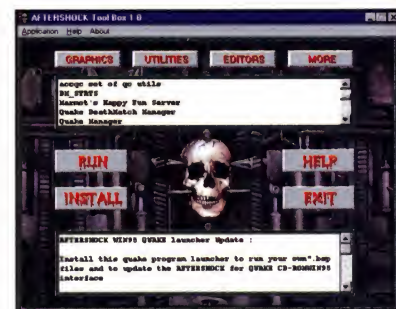
now the official *AfterShock* 3D design tool. Only the dedicated need apply, however, as it's a scary CAD-style package with lots of buttons and that.

Price: £TBC
Release date: Out now
Publisher: GT Interactive
Tel: 0171 258 3791

Not bad. Not bad at all.
SCORE: 75%

AFTERSHOCK TOOLBOX

OPSIE, BACK INTO POO-POO LAND. Keen to capitalise on their success, Head Games obviously thought a compilation of the best *Quake* utilities would be a smashing idea. Well, it would if it had been done better. What we have here are two good level editors - World-Craft and Thred (again) - some new monsters, some new weapons, and some *Quake* C patches. Good idea, except that the range of add-ons are poor, the quality is poor, and the





QUAKE MISSION PACK 1: THE SCOURGE OF ARMAGON

SCOURGE IS A WHOLE NEW FOUR-episode pack for *Quake*, officially sanctioned by iD. This means that not only do you get a suite of levels designed by the cream of design talent (there are some ex-iD and ex-Duke *Nukem* Level Lords here), but you also get three new monsters, two new weapons, loads of new power-ups, and some really, really cool *Nukem*-style environmental effects, such as exploding walls and floating-monorail-lift-things (for want of a better noun).

The Rift guys responsible for this have really sat down and worked at it – the levels are superb. For example, the whole first episode (five levels) is set in the dingy, sci-fi SlipGate complex style of the original,

with lots of *Nukem*-style 'blow up the reactor' and 'fight the water current' style conundrums. Then the whole pack goes off on one into the scary medieval stuff and culminates in a showdown with a very hard, very unpolite new end-of-level monster. You also get to deal with Centroids (metallic nail-firing scorpions), Gremlins (who steal your weapons and use them against you), and exploding puff ball things.

Added to your armoury is a new proximity-mine launcher and a new laser cannon, which sends ricocheting laser bolts off the scenery. There are also subtle effects like pock marks when you hit the walls, and a host of new scripted interactive scenery bits. One level, The Gauntlet, is just a series of unbelievably cunningly-scripted traps. And there

are new power-ups such as the Empathy Shield (which bounces any attack on you back onto the monstie) and the Horn of Conjuring which, er, conjures a Shambler to do your bidding (fighting, obviously – not any weird sexual requests).

Basically, this is supreme. This is completely brilliant. We recommend this.

Price: £24.99 (TBC)

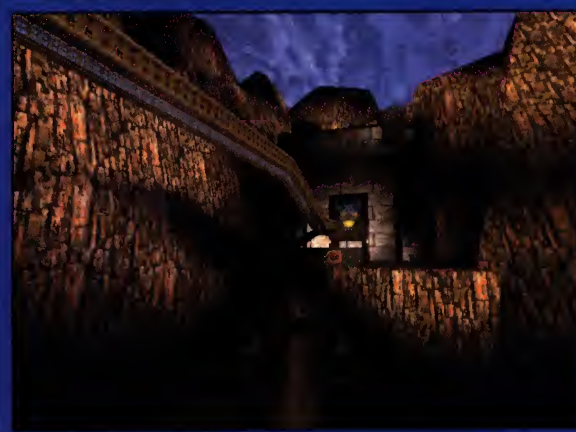
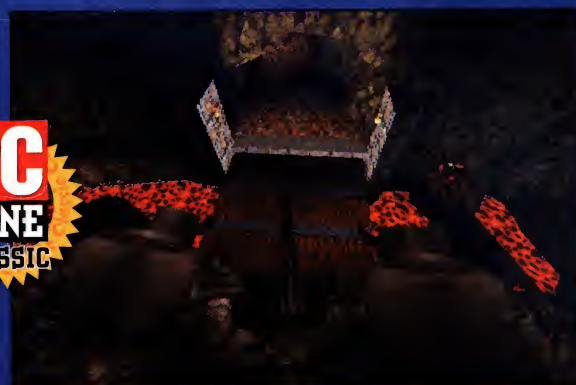
Release date: Out now

Publisher: Activision

Tel: 0181 742 9400

Bellissimo.

SCORE: 90%



**PC
ZONE
CLASSIC**

front-end is poor. Buried in among the 'new monsters' are very early and very bad patches for *Quake* Test, the three-level beta released yonks ago. The *Quake* C stuff is old and outdated. A quick romp around www.stomped.com or on a coverdisk will yield more recent and more effective stuff. The other utilities are

in the public domain and available free. Very, very disappointing. **Z**

Price: £19.99 **Release date:** Out now

Publisher: GT Interactive

Tel: 0171 258 3791

A bit poo.

SCORE: 32%



What you need

All these add-on packs require the full registered version of *Quake*. And to run *Quake* well you'll need at least a Pentium 75 with 8Mb RAM. A fast graphics card (or a 3D accelerator) would help too, as would more RAM, a nice big monitor, a good set of subwoofers, and somebody stroking your thigh while you play.

When we told **Patrick McCarthy** we had a cricket game we wanted him to review, he thought we said a ricket game, and was looking forward to denying essential vitamins to hundreds of children. How we laughed when the misunderstanding was cleared up.

EA Cricket 97



CRICKET ISN'T TRENDY, UNLIKE football – which is why there are so many of those irritating new Manchester United ‘fans’ like that bimboid Zoe Ball cluttering up the country at the moment. The fact that the English cricket team is slightly less successful than a live sex show starring Bernard Manning and Barbara Cartland doesn't help. Anyway, you may remember that we reviewed *Ian Botham International Cricket* in Issue 37. Or you may not. You may have been in prison for gerbil-related sexual offences, for all I know. Let's move along. In Australia it

(Above) The eight year old Zimbabwean bowler steams in to take another hat-trick against England.



(Left) Fiddler? He's a footballer, isn't he? Art art.

(Below) You can't beat a good visual duck pun, can you?

(Below right) Ooh, look. It's Fat Gatt getting bowled round his pads.



was called *EA Cricket* – but EA declined to take up the offer in the UK, and it came out under Beam's own name. But now we have *EA Cricket 97*, and basically, it's *IBIC* in a Virtual Stadium. And it's really quite good.

A game of several temporal subdivisions

Just as in the original version, you can play Test and One-Day matches, the World Challenge (which is a three-way competition modelled on the World Series) or a Fast Match, for people who are so impatient they can't even be bothered to pick a team. All the major Test-playing nations are represented, as are England. Unfortunately, the players all have fictional names. And you don't have in-game lunch and tea intervals, so it's reduced to being a game of two (or... er, four) halves. As well as the arcade side, there's a tactical element: you can set your own fields, swap bowlers about, and generally come over all Dermot Reeve. (Pause while Patrick checks that he's typed that last bit in the right order...)

Anyway...

It's far superior to the last version. For a start, motion-captured players look better than crappy old SNES-style sprites. And the in-game presentation is infinitely better with FMV footage of, and commentary by, Richie Benaud, the world's finest commentator. As you'd expect, he's excellent. Stuff like, "I've seen worse running between the wickets over the years" (pause) ... it's difficult to remember when... Cool, and completely convincing. (He even crops up in the installation sequence and tells you what to do. And when he fixes you with the stare that must have scared the shit out of anyone who played for him, you do as you're told, too.) Just to show you that it isn't as easy as he makes it look, there's also footage of Ian Botham, who's more wooden than Noah's Ark.



Shot-making

The one area where the game is still a bit on the weak side is in the shot-making. The computer still plays shots that you haven't selected – which seems perfectly acceptable when you get a boundary, but a bloody pain in the arse when you're out as a result. This aside, though, the controls are intuitive and well-thought out, and it's actually a very playable one- and two-player game. If you like cricket, you'll like this. And even if you don't, it's still playable – although you're probably better off jumping on the football or American sporting simulation bandwagon. **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb
Processor: Pentium recommended
Graphics: VGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Keyboard, joystick, mouse
Note: Quad-speed CD-ROM drive required

Score

80

The best cricket game – but there aren't that many.

Price: £TBA Release date: April
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Tel: 01753 549442

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Survivors • Mutes

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Demo — www.beam.com.au



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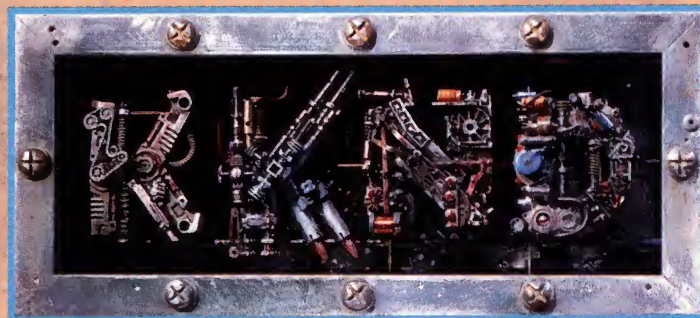
KKND is the advanced strategy war game with brains as well as balls, where your hordes attack, defend and think for themselves. Then put the boot in.



Windows and DOS SVGA graphics show battle scarred cities, Mute beasts fighting Survivor high tech, with varied missions, live-action video, hard core soundtracks and dark humour that's as sick as a parrot.

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the only way to live

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Andy Mitchell spent his school days playing battleships at the back of the class while Old Stinker was droning on about the 'squaw on the hippopotamus'. But times have changed since then – you'll need more than bits of paper if you want to play with the big boys.

Battleship



(Above) A missile with a mission heads enemy-wards.

(Above centre) Taxpayers finally take revenge on the Britannia.



(Below) The enemy is sunk as you prepare to bomb the bastis.

SO FIRSTLY, TO ASK THE OBVIOUS question: what makes this game any better than the pen and paper original? Well, the fundamental concept of the standard battleship game has been changed in two basic ways. Firstly, fleets can now move around instead of waiting like sitting ducks for a random shell to find them, and secondly, players must use various technologies to help them find the general area of the ocean where the opposing fleet is likely to be, before they can start to even think about lobbing shells and listening for the bang.

First find your tile

The first thing you'll notice is that the playing area is absolutely massive. The old paper grid in which you used to hide your fleet of ships is now only one of a large number of tiles which make up the ocean map. If you tried to recreate



this with pen and paper you'd need to buy about four zillion graph pads and then you'd have Sting and loads of other conservationists banging on your door. The first trick is to find the correct tile in which the enemy fleet is located before you bother to start shelling it. To begin your search you'll need to employ long-range aircraft, submarines and even satellite photography to identify possible locations. Of course you'll only get an indication of likely spots, as the enemy fleet is probably steaming at top knots in the opposite direction. So there's no guarantee that once you've sailed halfway across the ocean there will be anyone there to arm wrestle with.

Additional missions

In addition to the simple scenario of 'Chase me Sailor' around the massive map, there are 21 special missions for you to play such as escort missions and others where you've got to guard and protect nuclear weapons from attack.

As well as the central HQs you'll discover many islands peppered over the vast ocean which offer repair facilities for your damaged ships. This is useful because as long as you keep an eye on your damage control screen you can break away from no-win situations and make smoke for a friendly harbour, therefore prolonging the mission.

The game comes on two CDs, though you'll only need the second one for the multi-player mode. Up to four players can play at once, and if you're Norman No-mates your PC will be happy to create a number of split personalities which will kick your bilges from all points of the compass with consummate ease. It's not C&C, but it can be fun.

At this point it should also be mentioned that there are no gentlemanly rules of conduct in this game. There's no waiting for each of the fleets to line

up and have their turn at hurling high explosives in an orderly fashion. When you finally see the whites of their eyes it's time for some real-time action and you must throw everything you've got as fast as you can in order to survive.

A waste of paper?

What we have here is a timeless favourite upgraded to include all the bells and whistles (and fog-horns) that the multimedia PC can offer. If you want to hear the scream of incoming shells and see video footage of cruise missiles skimming the waves then you can't fail to be impressed, but ultimately it doesn't change the fact that this is still a pretty basic concept wrapped in hi-tech clothing. While the multi-player mode is a rather jolly affair, the lack of any kind of dynamic campaign mode (where you get to play through a series of linked missions) leaves you feeling a little short-changed. **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb (12Mb recommended)

Processor: 486DX2/66 (Pentium rec'd)

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: SoundBlaster or 100% compatible

Controls: Mouse, keyboard

Note: Windows 95 required

Score

70

Playing it on a PC isn't that much different to playing it on paper – it's just bigger.

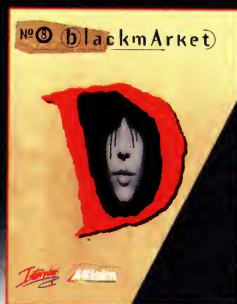
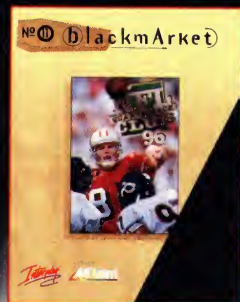
Price: £39.99 **Release date:** Out now

Publisher: Hasbro Interactive

Tel: 0181 569 1234

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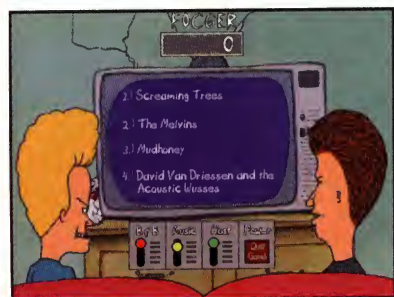
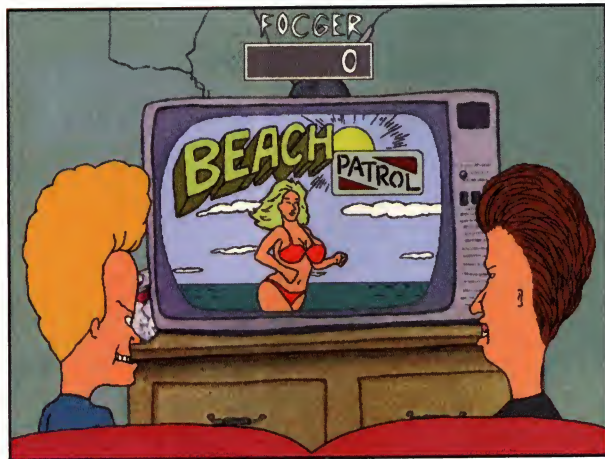


blackmArket

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Beavis & Butt-Head

Whoah! As the only guy in the office who sucks as much as the dumbass duo, **Charlie Brooker** got the job of reviewing their thingies. Hur hur hur.



WIENER TAKES ALL

THE GRUESOME TWOSOME WITH THE collective IQ of a soup tureen come shambling onto your monitor screen in this, the first of three MTV-endorsed cheapo releases seeing the light of day this month.

Wiener Takes All is basically the same as one of those trivia machines you get in pubs, except that the questions don't suddenly become impossible to answer, and you won't spill beer down your front in an effort to punch the buttons with your fist before the two-millisecond time limit expires. The format is amusing at first: the questions are read out on a TV quiz show which Beavis and Butt-Head are doing their level best to ignore (they babble incessantly over the questions, about completely unrelated subjects, apparently in an effort to put you off). Despite being billed a "party trivia game", I can't help thinking that it would be a pretty dull party if the host suddenly pulled this out. Still, it's only a tenner – but if you want a really funny comedy quiz game, get *You Don't Know Jack* instead.

SCORE: 58%

(Above) "Whoah, Beavis! Look at the thingies on that chick. Hur hur hur."

(Above centre) That guy sucks. Change it."

(Above right) "Hey, who are those two cool dudes, Butt-Head?" Hur hur hur."

(Left) "Whoah, this is boring. Change it."



(Below) "Mouseburger and flies to go Beavis." "Yeah, diarrhoea cha-cha-cha, Butt-Head."



LITTLE THINGIES

THE DAYS WHEN 'B & B' STOOD FOR 'Bed and Breakfast' seem further away than ever as the poor white trash invasion continues. *Little Thingies* is a collection of seven mini-games for Windows 95, several of which have previously seen the light of day in *Virtual Stupidity*, the dumbass duo's point-and-click adventure of last year. They're simple, bizarre exercises in arcade banality – ideal coffee break fodder. What's more, they're laugh-out-loud funny, in a shamelessly puerile manner: *Hock-a-Loogie*, which sees you trying to hit moving targets (ie people) with phlegm globs from the school roof, and *Court Chaos*, an *Operation Wolf* game re-enacted with an automated tennis ball server were my two favourites.

If you know someone who persists in playing that sodding *Windows Patience* game, do them a favour and install one of these instead. Do watch your disk space, however: *Little Thingies* will install an identical FMV sequence seven times over (should you decide you want all seven games) – swelling the overall required space by over 32MB, to a ludicrous total of 51MB. Like, duuuuhhhh, Beavis.

SCORE: 71%



CALLING ALL DORKS

IF LITTLE THINGIES IS THE BEST OF the Beavis and Butt-Head bunch, *Calling All Dorks* is by far and away the worst. It's nothing more than a collection of desktop 'themes': wallpaper, animated cursors, 'zany' icons and 'wacky' sound files which transform Windows 95 from a just-about-bearable graphical user interface, into an infuriating, cacophonous shitswamp.

Beavis and Butt-Head are extremely funny on television, but do you really want to hear them sniggering about something every bloody time you so much as minimise a window? And if you do (may God have mercy on your soul), then why don't you just record the sound files from the television yourself?

True, you get a whopping great load of stuff here – some of the soundfiles are immense (once again, watch your disk space) – and it's only £9.99, but really... There's only ten minutes of amusement here at best, and ultimately, the joke's on you. Avoid. **Z**

SCORE: 20%

Release details

Price: £9.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: MTV Interactive/Virgin

Tel: 0171 368 2255

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

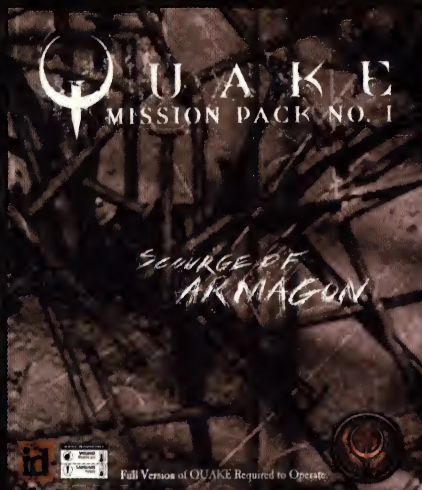
Processor: 486DX/66 Windows 95

Graphics: VGA

Sound: Windows-compatible sound card

Controls: Mouse





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Nasty lightning traps, floating spike
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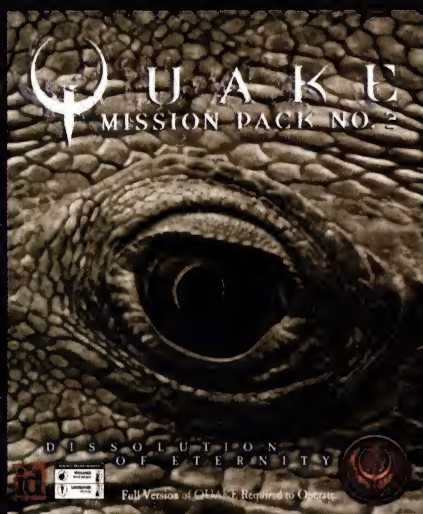
A maximum-range, massive-damage
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QUAKE

MISSION PACKS NO. 1 & 2

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SECURES DRYWALL,
FASTENS ROOF TILES,
ANCHORS FLOORING,
EXTERMINATES
THOSE PESKY
FLESH-EATING,
TECHNO-DEMONS
FROM HELL!



REVIEW ZONE EXTRA!



TOY STORY

WAHEY - WELL IF IT ISN'T THAT HARDY perennial, the movie licence platform game. Since the movie under question is the highly enjoyable *Toy Story*, Disney Interactive can be forgiven for assuming the subject matter would lend itself nicely to a bit of arcade fun, but unfortunately the end result is downright toothless. The graphics and animation are as eye-pleasing as you'd expect, yet the entire project is scuppered by tepid, uninspiring levels loosely based upon scenes from the movie.

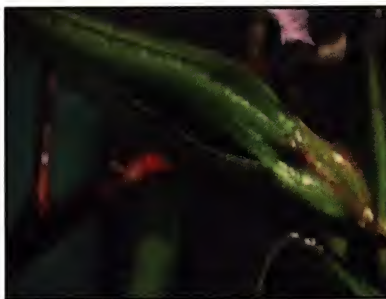
It's one of those platform games where it's hard to actually jump over or onto anything without faffing around for ages; completing each level becomes a chore rather than a challenge. Even the most gullible of young children - clearly its target audience - should see through this lacklustre tie-in in a thrice. Woody and Buzz are undeniably wonderful creations but, on this evidence, they've got a long way to go to achieve success in the *real* digitised world. If you see what I mean.

Publisher: Disney Interactive
Price: £TBA
Tel: 0171 605 2400

SCORE: 60%

(Above) Woody takes a giant step for Toy kind.

Charlie Brooker welcomes you to the Run-on Reviews, the locked room wherein the mutant children of the mad old crone who looks after Gameplay Castle are imprisoned. They bang on the walls, tear their hair, eyes and tongues out until they're ankle-deep in blood, but they can't escape into the light where the decent, upstanding games are.



COLD CUT: ATOMIC MOOG 2000

OKAY, SO THIS ISN'T A GAME AT ALL. IN fact, it's a CD single. So why did Ninja Tune sling a copy our way? Because it's a 'CD Plus', that's why - you've got the choice of playing it as per usual in your hi-fi (without worrying about data tracks), or you can slip it into your computer's drive and prise a few digital nuggets from the ether.

On-board lurks a copy of 'Natural Rhythm', an artful little exercise in audio-visual clever-clogger. Some enterprising soul has trawled through hour upon hour of natural history documentaries, pinching hundreds of snippets of footage en route. Each clip is then employed as a 'sample' - with the whole shebang mixed into a mind-mangling collage of sound and vision,

in which every noise you hear has a corresponding piece of video. Trance-inducing in the nicest sense, really.

Oh yeah, and it's supplied in both Apple QuickTime and MPEG formats (the latter being the more sensible option). The 'normal' CD tracks are cool too, so if you're a Coldcut fan, keep a beady one out for this.

Publisher: Ninja Tune

Price: £4.99

Contact: <http://www.obsolete.com/pipe/>

SCORE: N/A

STRIKEPOINT: THE HEX MISSIONS

DO YOU REMEMBER A CERTAIN GAME called *Comanche: Maximum Overkill*? Well, the makers of *Strikepoint* obviously do. What we have here is a defiantly unrealistic excursion into Arcade War land, halfway between the aforementioned *Comanche* and EA's ol' faithful *Desert Strike* series. It's all bang, bang, bang, bang, collect that, bang bang, collect this, bang, bang, bang. You can't crash into the scenery.

The controls are incredibly unwieldy (although you can redefine them), and the action is bemusing and uninspiring



The Oxfordshire Course (PGA Europe add-on disk)

IF YOU LIKE PGA EUROPE, AND YOU'RE BORED with the three courses that come with it, then what more could you ask for but a data disk? Well, alright, you could ask for a 1954 Porsche 356 Speedster, three years on an island hideaway with your favourite fantasy sexual partner, or even just a really big egg and bacon sandwich. But if it had to be to do with *PGA Europe*, it would probably be extra courses.

And here's the first data disk. Unfortunately, it only has one course, the Oxfordshire Course.

It's quite a nice course, a cross between American-style target golf and the European pitch-and-run type. And you can see the developers have been busy: they've worked on the watery side of things in the graphics, for example. There's additional commentary by the BBC's weasel-sounding Scotsman Alex Hay - so now you'll have two people slugging you off when you whack a high-velocity slice into the course-side babies' nappy-changing area. And you can install additional

tee advice by him for the courses you already have. But even so, you're still only getting one course for 20 quid, which isn't the best bargain you'll ever see. Hence the low score. But it may be worth stealing.

Patrick McCarthy

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Tel: 01753 549442

Price: £19.99

SCORE: 65%



at the same time. Sadly, a searing blast of premium grade hi-octane super-gameplay it is not. Indeed, the sole note of interest here is the inclusion of a split-screen two-player mode (which is something we don't see enough of on the PC), which is marginally good entertainment for a short while – a little like an airborne *Return Fire*. Overall, though, it's a bit of a yawn.

Publisher: Project Two/Elite
Price: £TBA
Contact: www.elite-systems.co.uk

SCORE: 62%



FLIP OUT!

SADLY, THIS IS NOT A GAME IN WHICH YOU really get to 'flip out' and flail with total wild abandon at innocent bystanders with a baseball bat. Beware of anything which has an exclamation mark in the title – unless it's *Icepick In The Eye!*, of course, which by all accounts is a fairly amusing horror movie.

Flip Out!, on the other hand, is neither amusing nor a horror movie. It's a puzzle game in which you have to flip a load of coloured tiles around until they're sitting where the computer wants them to sit. It's been spruced up with a frankly absurd amount of (okay, admittedly high-quality) FMV and rendered-sprite action, but no measure of window-dressing can disguise the fact that, at heart, it's not much more than a fairly basic and uninvolved exercise in trial and error gameplay.

Not that it's particularly *bad*, it's just not particularly *good* either – and that makes it hard to recommend. The best puzzle games become as addictive as crack cocaine; sadly, *Flip Out!* has more in common with Krackawheat.

Publisher: Gametek
Price: £TBA
Tel: 01753 553445

SCORE: 60%

SUPER LEAGUE PRO RUGBY

THE FIRST THING THAT STRIKES YOU is the front cover, which features four of the least convincing 'rugby' players I've ever seen. It looks a bit like that TV

commercial for *Gay Xchange* – the "which one of these men would you like to know better?" chatline, except that here the models appear to be about 12 years old (and the weird-looking leotard bloke is nowhere to be seen).

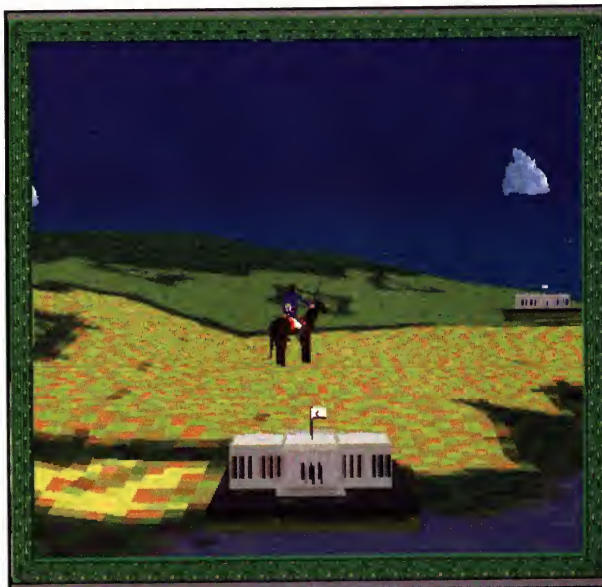
The game itself is even more bizarre. Half the players look like George Dawes, the other half Sammy Davis Jnr. And all of them appear to be dwarves, thanks to the cartoon-like head-to-body ratio. They run around in an unsettling manner, and at a downright insulting leisurely pace – it's a bit like watching ugly, malevolent pixies mucking around in slow motion on an imaginary village green. And the gameplay? I'd rather just brush straight past that, if you don't mind. If Alternative Software want a quote for the advertising, they're welcome to this one: "Super League Pro Rugby – a sports game that quite frankly *beggars belief*". Okay?

Publisher: Alternative Software
Price: £29.99
Tel: 01977 780767

SCORE: 50%

DESTINY

HERE'S A BRIEF SNIPPET FROM THE *Destiny* manual: "Change Recognized Religion: Click to open the Religion Type list and then click a religion. Note: The available religion types depend on cultural discoveries. At higher degrees of difficulty, changing religion may result in riots or revolts." That should give you an idea of what we're dealing with here:



(Above) Conquer the world and time itself – if you've got the time.

to whit, a multi-player *Civilization*-style strategy/resource management game which goes into utterly arse-aching detail about *everything*.

It covers social evolution from the club-swingin' craziness of the Stone Age, right through to the MTV-addled '90s, and should keep anyone with a strategic bent and a seriously large measure of time on their hands busy for ages.

To be honest, it's hard for me to mark this kind of thing – after all, in games of this ilk, the fun you experience is directly related to the amount of effort you put in, and I simply don't have the *patience* to apply myself to this, so if the concept appeals, do check it out. The sheer wealth of options suggests that unashamed anorak types are in for a treat. And the modem-based multi-player mode should be responsible for quite a few sleepless nights, too. Not to mention overdraft-baiting phone bills. **Z**

Publisher: Interactive Magic
Price: £39.99
Tel: 01344 409399

SCORE: 77%

(Below) Will Carling (or is it Sammy Davis Jnr?) about to score for England.



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Budget Games

(cut here for free badge!)

Patrick McCarthy says: Shopping on a budget? Avoid heart disease and cancer in your family by buying fresh vegetables instead of the easier option of high-fat, high-additive, ready-made meals – eat your way to health. Or, let the pasty-faced bastards starve, and blow your meagre income on bargain games...

Dawn Patrol



MORE THAN TWO YEARS BEFORE the wonderment and general all-round loveliness of *Flying Corps*, Empire released *Dawn Patrol*, Rowan's first attempt at a First World War flight sim. It laid claims to being an "interactive book", or even (gulp) an edutainment. This meant, basically, that you read about certain events which happened in WWI, and then relived all the experiences yourself, actually controlling the aircraft involved. The idea was to learn about the pilots of the time, give you an insight into the tribulations they faced, and learn to appreciate the different handling

characteristics of the planes, while at the same time having a bit of fun shooting stuff.

The graphics were good for the time, and it had accurate flight models, good enemy intelligence, different cockpit layouts and excellent padlock views. As you'd expect, it looks pretty dated compared to the current model, but crap PC-owners will be pleased that it runs quite acceptably on a 486 in SVGA.

The lack of an on-going career mode doesn't help – although there are a handful of mini careers, containing a few missions each – it's one to dip in and out of rather than one which involves you completely. Still, it's not bad for the price.

Publisher: VIE White Label
Price: £12.99
Tel: 0171 368 2255

SCORE: 70%



Screamer



ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG LONG ago, there was a games console called the PlayStation. It had an arcade driving game on it called *Ridge Racer* which was very fast, and it looked so nice it was almost like having the coin-op in your home. (Except you didn't have to keep putting pound coins into it, and small children didn't keep sticking their stupid, fat, chip-smeared faces in the way of the screen.) PlayStation owners were very pleased with themselves. Then along came *Screamer* on the PC. It looked as good, it had six supercars to drive, six courses to race on and it, too, was very fast – faster

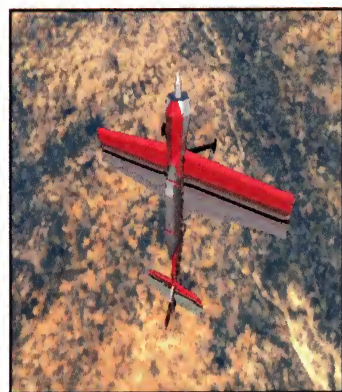
than an editor leaving a pub – when it's his turn to get the beer in. Oh, and it was much cheaper than *Ridge Racer*. Suddenly, PlayStation owners didn't like arcade driving games any more – or their PlayStations. PC owners laughed. And bought *Screamer* several months later for ten pounds.

Publisher: VIE White Label
Price: £9.99
Tel: 0171 368 2255

SCORE: 80%



Flight Unlimited



A'PROPER' FLIGHT SIM, IN WHICH you fly about, looking at the amazing scenery and – if you're remotely normal – wishing you had something to shoot at or drop a small bomb on. If, on the other hand, you're one of those weird 'well-adjusted' people we've heard about for whom mass destruction is anathema, then you'd probably just enjoy the fact that

you had really unusual planes to fly about in: a Sukhoi SU-31 aerobatic plane, for example, along with a Pitts Special, a Decathlon, an Extra and a Grob glider. They all handle extremely accurately, to the extent that the developers claim you can use the game to learn to fly in real life. To this end, there are 25 manoeuvres and lessons, along with an intelligent instructor who tells you what to do and where you're going wrong. 24 Issues ago when we reviewed it, the recommended specs were at least a P100 with a large bucket of RAM. So who knows – you might even be able to play it, now. Having the full monty in the flight control system and rudder departments would help.

Publisher: VIE White Label
Price: £9.99
Tel: 0171 368 2255

SCORE: 90%



Terminator: Future Shock



ASUPERB-LOOKING, DOOM-STYLE first-person viewed shoot 'em up, loosely based on the first *Terminator* film, which means you get to shoot the arse off of terminators, walking robots and big flying round spaceshippy-things that look a bit like the tomato monsters from *Doom* without the teeth. A proper 3D engine, and full freedom of movement, means that you're forced to look up and down and all around you, or you'll die very quickly.

The levels are truly enormous, which is a bit of a drawback, as it takes bloody hours to explore them, and there's no sodding in-game map. Your time is

therefore evenly divided between getting a red-hot trigger finger, and crying like a baby because you're completely lost. You'll also need to remind yourself what your mission objectives are by the old-fashioned method of writing them down on a piece of toilet-paper, as there's no in-game reminder once a level starts. Apart from that, it's great. **Z**

Publisher: VIE White Label
Price: £9.99
Tel: 0171 368 2255

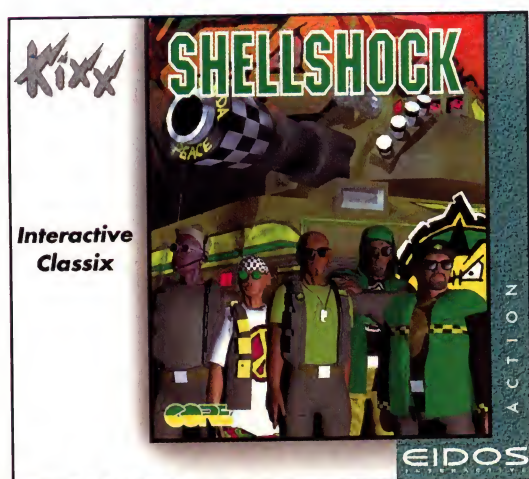
SCORE: 75%



MINIMUM OUTLAY



Interactive Classix



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HIT START FOR ME, ARGENTINA!

**IT'S HERE AT LAST! You've seen the movie!
You've heard the soundtrack! Now play the game!**



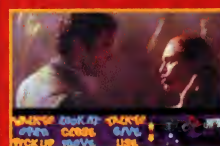
THEY SAID IT couldn't be done. Then they said it shouldn't be done. But we kept a beady

eye on the sales forecasts and did it anyway. *Evita*™ for PC CD-ROM – the world's first sing 'em up – is here at last. It's a pixel-perfect pageant of pop-opera performance which will set your monitor alight, just as surely as if you'd poured petrol down the back and struck a match over the bastard thing.



OUR DESIGNERS have spent literally decades motion-capturing the 'material girl'

and placing her slap-bang right in the middle of the action. The result? The most phenomenal in-game graphics you've ever seen in your life!* Guide Eva Peron through a simply staggering collection of nerve-hammering levels – from cheery platform game insanity, to soul-destroying point-and-click tedium. And try as it might, your toe won't stop tapping to the sound of Andrew Lloyd Webber's popular score (includes remixes by Goldie, A Guy Called Gerald, Shy FX and 'Nige' from *EastEnders*).



SO WHAT ARE you waiting for? Pop down to your local games store today,

and buy a copy. No, make that two. Actually, why not just stuff a huge wad of cash into an envelope and send it straight to our chairman? Eh? Eh? Come on, you hateful sheep – consume. Consume, consume and obey, like the thoughtless, trend-following, brain-dead, woefully insignificant blobs of carbon that you are. We despise you all, you pointless scum, you.



When is a movie licence not a movie licence? When it's one that Charlie Brooker's just made up. Read on, and all will become clear...

SOME SOFTWARE PUBLISHERS WILL DO MORE OR LESS anything to make you buy a game. Believe me, if they had the time and the resources, they'd be round your house right now performing squalid sexual favours. Since that isn't really a viable option, they have to try far subtler means. Churning out carbon copies of popular best-sellers (in the belief that we all want ten copies of the same thing) is one option: witness the non-stop deluge of *Doom*-a-likes, and the current flood of *C&C* wannabes. If that doesn't work, there are other ways to capture the attention of your

Games we'd like to see as movies

There have been several misguided attempts at turning videogame success into box office magic: *Mortal Kombat*, *StreetFighter II*, and *Super Mario Brothers* spring unpleasantly to mind. Shit films, the lot of 'em. Well, we reckon they're just not picking the right games for adaptation. Because we'd like *nothing* better than to be able to slouch in our seats and munch our way through truckloads of popcorn watching celluloid versions of the following...

BAKU BAKU ANIMAL



A bizarre choice, you may think, and you'd be right. Which is precisely why it'd make such a great film. You see, as far as the Japanese programmers are concerned, the action in *Baku Baku* represents a 'World Zookeeper Contest'. Picture the live action version if you will... we follow a group of zookeepers as they travel from all corners of the globe, eventually arriving in Tokyo to compete in the prestigious *Baku Baku* tournament. Each must fill a large pit with different types of foodstuff (bones, bamboo, carrots etc), and occasionally drop in a live animal head. If they're lucky, the animal heads will eat up most of the food. If they're unlucky, some sad music is played on the tannoys. And, er... that's just about it. It'd star Terry Thomas and Peter Sellers. And loads of animatronic animals.

Well, okay, so it's not the most convincing 'pitch' ever... and the two stars *are* dead... but hey, it'd be better than *Cannonball Run 2*.

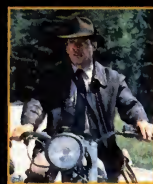
QUAKE

Blindly obvious, we know (and there's still no sign of the oft-mentioned *Doom* movie), but hey, ya gotta admit, it'd be a swell movie. Get Peter Jackson (of *Bad Taste* and *Braindead* fame) to direct it and you're sorted. Oh, and hire Bruce Campbell (from the *Evil Dead* movies) to play the lead while you're about it, too.



TOMB RAIDER

The similarities between this and the *Indiana Jones* films are pointed out elsewhere in this article, but there's no reason why Lara Croft shouldn't make the crossover from 'teeny screen' to 'silver screen'. And if they managed to retain *Tomb Raider's* arse-hugging camerawork, it'd be a hit.



TEKKEN

Now, this is wandering a little away from the topic (especially since the game won't be out on the PC for a while), but I reckon *Tekken* would make a superb sitcom. No, really. It'd be just like any other sitcom – stereotypical characters, canned laughter, predictable plot *etc* – but it would all be

'filmed' in *Tekken-Vision*. That is, it'd look just like the game, with no live actors. And each week, no matter what the storyline was, everything would come to blows. It'd be great.



« public. How about a 'controversial', 'tongue in cheek' (or you could say offensive) advertising campaign – say, perhaps, a picture of a young woman checking out the 'undocumented features' on her SideWinder joystick?

If you don't have the stomach for that, there's always the final, last-ditch option. Buy the videogame rights to an upcoming movie, and bring out a hastily assembled spin-off within weeks of its cinema release. It'll be crap, granted, but *ahhhhh*, look at those sales figures.

Licence to print money

Everybody knows that most movie tie-in games are useless. After all, a significant portion of the development costs gets blown on securing the licence, before a

(Above right) Hands up who'd like to see the gorgeous Lara Croft on the silver screen? It'd beat squinting at her on a small PC monitor any day...

single line of code is written.

What's more, the majority of these games actually have little to do with the film in question, apart from the logo on the front of the box. Well, we here at *Zone* don't like the idea of our readers shelling out hard-earned money for soullessly manufactured celluloid-related cack. Why should you line the pockets of these maverick shysters when you can simply *imagine* that the game you're playing is based on your favourite movie? Eh? EH?

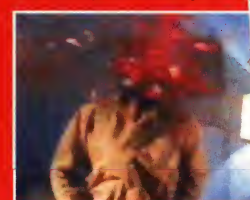
So, simply have a read through our suggestions and then come up with a few of your own. It's easy...

Licence? We don't need no steenking licence

Here's our handy guide to 'unofficial licences' – that is, games which you could pretend are based on your favourite film, even though they aren't really...

Dawn Of The Dead or Zombie Flesh Eaters

"When there's no more room in HELL... the dead shall walk the earth" read the promo posters for George Romero's distinctly un-cheery



1979 zombie epic *Dawn Of The Dead*, a film in which exposed human innards more or less take the starring role. The similar, yet altogether tackier *Zombie Flesh Eaters* preferred the somewhat more confrontational slogan "We are going to EAT you!". In both movies claustrophobic, gore-sodden paranoia is the order of the day – just as it is in *Resident Evil*, the acclaimed



Capcom frightener, due to make a long-awaited appearance in PC Gaming Land within the next few months. *Resident Evil's* undead army adhere strictly to the video nasty zombie 'code': they shamble toward the living (after all, a proper zombie *never* breaks into a run), moan incoherently, attack in groups, and take gigantic bites out of your neck whenever they get close enough to do so. Naturally, only a direct shotgun blast to the brain can stop them. They're like Jehovah's Witnesses really, but with even poorer dress sense.

Crash

So they've banned the movie in order to protect us. We're not allowed to watch James Spader, Holly Hunter, and Roseanna Arquette derive sexual stimulation from life-threatening car crashes in case it gives us ideas. It's an insulting decision which implies that the cinema-going public is comprised entirely of mindless, mimicking sheep – and





besides, a nationwide epidemic of pornographic pile-ups would certainly liven up Alistair Stewart's poxy *Police, Camera, Action* television series no end (especially if they were all crashing into him - the short-arse).

Mind you, who really cares what the politicians have to say about the movie? It's still a free country. You can get as many *Crash*-style sexual kicks as you want, providing you follow these simple instructions...

You will need: Your PC, a willing sexual partner, a copy of *Destruction Derby 2*.

Method: Install and run the game. Play for approximately 15 minutes in order to accustom yourself with the controls, and become fully immersed in the on-screen action. Without taking your eyes off the screen, or your hands from the controls, allow your partner to perform a variety of sex acts on you. As they do so, attempt to drive head-on into as many vehicles as possible (quite a challenge when you consider how hard it will be to retain control of your car). Ideally, you should aim to flip your vehicle vertically through 360 degrees at the point of orgasm. Simply repeat this routine whenever you feel the slightest sexual urge, until you find it impossible to get aroused without the sound of shrieking metal ringing in your ears.

Reservoir Dogs / Taxi Driver / Man Bites Dog / Anything by John Woo

What do all these films have in common? Well, they're cult classics, for one thing (which means that every male student in the nation has stuck a poster of at least one of them on his bedroom wall, in the deluded belief that this will make him 'cool'), but aside from that, they all feature plenty of *nonchalant* gunplay. Enough lead to produce a thousand stained glass windows, flying through the air like a swarm of angry bees: that's the common theme.

Well, Sega's *Virtua Cop* fits that profile like a glove. There's so much relentless



(Left) We didn't dare ask Charlie if he's road-tested his alternative method for playing *Destruction Derby* ... we decided to play safe and watch *Man Bites Dog* (above) instead.



killing involved, it's hard not to lapse in a frankly disturbing 'murdering trance' by the time you're halfway through level

two. Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, you go, instinctively shooting anything anything on sight that dares to move, your eyes gazing soullessly into the digital beyond, like a myopic Travis



Bickle. Bang bang bang bang bang. Reload. Bang bang bang bang bang. Scary stuff, and no mistake.

Who Framed Roger Rabbit?

Cinema goers are promised a sequel to this modern-day classic later this year, but you can get yourself in the mood right now, with your PC. If seeing real live human beings mingling seamlessly with hand-drawn cartoon characters is your bag, you



should check out *Toonstruck*, from Virgin. A recent release which was sadly overlooked during the Christmas rush, it features a central performance from Christopher Lloyd, who is great, great, great, great (and, spookily enough, appeared in *Roger Rabbit* to boot). We wuv him woads.



The Italian Job

If you fancy joining the 'self preservation society' in the comfort of your own home, look no further than EIDOS

Films that should get proper licences...
We've attempted to prove that you don't need an 'officially licensed' product in order to enjoy movie-related hi-jinks on your PC. But there are still a few films that we'd really like to see sitting proudly upon the shelves of our local software superstore...

SEVEN

Now there's a game - or to be more accurate, seven sub-games. You play the part of John Doe, self-proclaimed 'artist' and all-round psychotic nutrag. Your task? To kill seven people in incredibly unpleasant ways, in order to make some kind of vague point about the decline of modern society. Vicious, maybe, but far more artistically valid than contemporary dance, I'm sure you'll agree.

Force-feeding the fat guy would probably be the most fun, gameplay-wise... indeed, now that I come to think of it, I'm not really sure how you could actually do any of the other stages. Oh sod it, let's make a platform game instead...

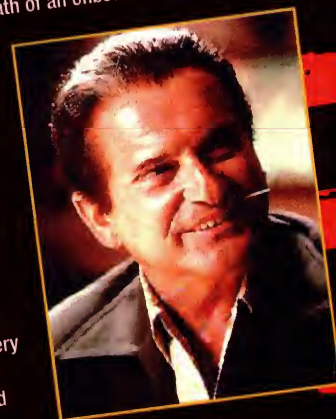


ANY OF THE AIRPORT MOVIES

I've often thought that you could liven up the average flight sim no end by turning it into a 'disaster' flight sim. Perhaps it could simulate the effects of food-poisoning on the pilot, for instance (by blurring the views, covering the controls in vomit, emulating hallucinations, etc). Or force you to deal with the aftermath of an onboard explosion. Best of all, it could cast you as a stewardess with no aviation experience whatsoever, who has to be 'talked through' the landing by Lloyd Bridges back at the control tower. Crash into a mountain and the game changes completely - into a survival sim based on the movie *Alive*. Mouth-watering stuff, eh?

GOODFELLAS/CASINO

They'd make top-rate point-and-click adventures, but the main reason for mentioning Scorsese's gangster epics is the pint-sized punkoid king, Joe Pesci. Now there's a videogame character waiting to happen. Put Joe Pesci in a 3D beat 'em 'up and we'd pick him every time (especially if he's allowed to hurl his trademark insults). What's more, you can bet your arse that he'd win every time, too.





Interactive's *Big Red Racing*. To all intents and purposes it's a three-dimensional version of *Micro Machines* – but what we're interested in here is the 'Italian' stage, in which you get to race a bunch of minis around, in an eerily familiar styl-ee. There's even a bus dangling over the side of a cliff in there.

Bachelor Party / Revenge Of The Nerds / Hot Dog! The Movie, etc etc

You know the kind of thing I'm talking about. We've all seen films like this, usually on video round a friend's house, at the age of thirteen, in



the conviction that what we are watching is a *bona fide* 'adult' movie. Knuckleheaded, graceless rip-offs of *Animal House*, in which a bunch of odious American high-school lads get up to all kinds of hilarious shenanigans – including alcohol abuse, sexual harassment, voyeurism and wanton vandalism. Ho ho ho. Each tiresome plot device inexorably leads to the pivotal scene in which a naïve young actress nervously removes her top in front of a randy middle-aged film crew, in the mistaken belief that one day she'll be as rich and famous as Demi Moore (when in reality all that awaits is a worsening cocaine habit and a 'demanding' part in *Zero-Dignity Dick Jugglers IV*).

Still, if you like that kind of thing, you'll be heartily glad to know that this particular brand of asinine shit is ably represented on the PC gaming front by Sierra's *Leisure Suit Larry* series. Despite the fact that they're billed as 'comedies', playing a *Larry* game is perhaps the least amusing thing you can do with your computer (ranking several notches below 'accidentally re-formatting your hard drive'). Furthermore, as in the aforementioned teen-sex comedies, the 'titillating' content manages to be both offensively gratuitous and woefully inadequate at the same time. To make things worse, their creator, Al Lowe, appears to suffer from rampant ego-mania. His name appears all over the boxes, promotional artwork, manuals, and credit screens – an act of ill-advised self-promotion that seems to be on a par with marketing a range of dog turd sculptures shaped in your own image.

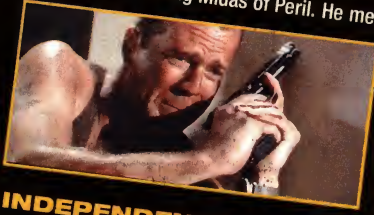
(Above left) *Big Red Racing* meets *The Italian Job* – maybe someone will snap up this licence for real and do the job properly...?

The 'official' tie-ins...

There have been hundreds of movie tie-ins throughout videogaming history. Some are bad (*Last Action Hero* on the SNES is perhaps the worst ever), some are good (*Tron*, or any of the *Star Wars* games), and some are better than the movies themselves (*Firefox*). Here are just a few of the more recent entries into the fray...

DIE HARD TRILOGY (Fox Interactive)

In which the lucky player gets to take control of renegade cop, fall guy, and vest enthusiast John McClane (aka Bruce Willis) in order to guide him through a bunch of sub-games closely based upon the popular action movie series. Of course, if they were *really* faithful to the original films, it would be impossible for your character to *die* at any point in the game. And everything he went within five feet of would immediately explode. Because let's face it, John McClane is the King Midas of Peril. He merely has to pop his head round the door and before you know it, there's a jumbo-jet full of terrorists crashing through the wall, hurling grenades this way and that like a schoolyard gang during a snowball fight. It doesn't make him a hero in my book. It makes him a sodding *jinx*.



INDEPENDENCE DAY (Fox Interactive)

Distinctly uninspiring *Afterburner Terminal* or *Velocity* style shoot 'em 'up. Still, it's faithful to the film in many respects (ie it's pretty, but ultimately a bit of a no-brainer).

STAR WARS TRILOGY (LucasArts)



Take your pick... there's *Rebel Assault*, *Dark Forces...* and now, *X-Wing vs TIE Fighter*. Superb stuff. Yes, the *Star Wars*-worshipping PC owner is well served by the LucasArts posse. And with the movies back in the cinemas this summer, who's complaining?

ALIEN TRILOGY (Acclaim)

Lacklustre *Doom*-a-like which should have been far, far scarier. *Space Hulk* or *X:COM* are two games which have more in common with the *Alien* movies, and are executed with far more panache.



MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL (7th Level)



Probably the most faithful adaptation of a movie yet – but then again, that's because it's not exactly a game at all. It's more of a 'multimedia experience'. Since the bulk of the laughs are provided by lengthy excerpts from the film, you'd be better off watching that instead. Besides, it's cheaper.

MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND (Activision)

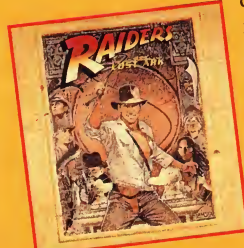
Delightful kiddie-orientated point-and-click muppetry; surely your only chance to see Billy Connolly wandering around on your Windows desktop (and he doesn't swear, either).



Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom

Okay okay, we know we're bending the rules just a little bit here as you'll know as well as we do that there are already a couple of gen-u-wine *Indy* games on the market. Okay, so our chosen stand-in game stars a *woman* instead of a *man*.

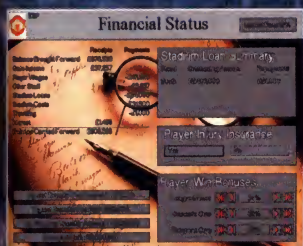
And okay, so it's a pretty bloody obvious choice to make. The facts, nonetheless, are the facts: *Tomb Raider* is the *Indiana Jones* arcade game that never was. It's the opening sequence from *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*, filmed in Super-



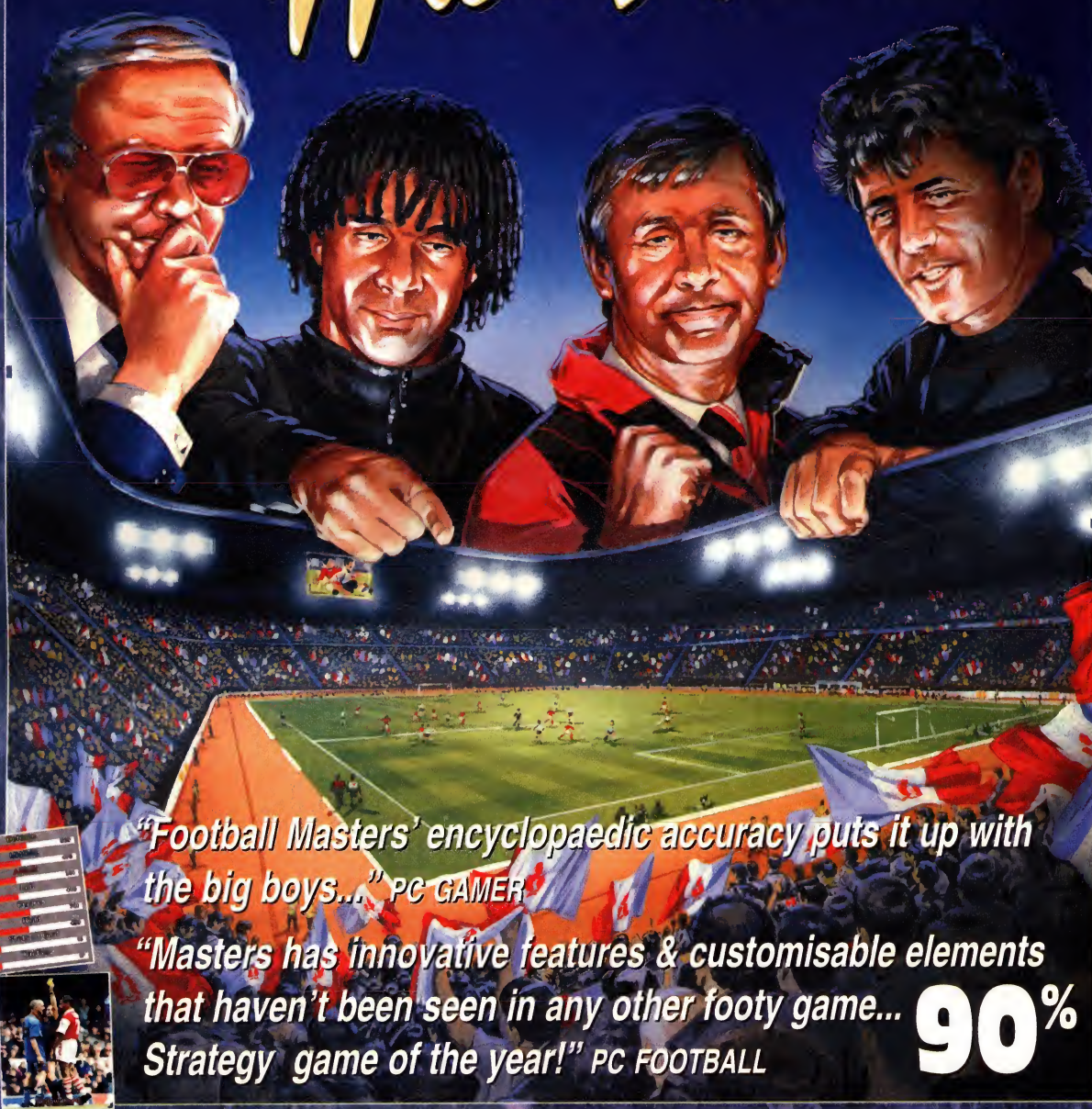
Polygon-Vision, and stretched out for hour after fun-packed hour. If you haven't tasted its charms yet, you're a plum. Yes, that's right – a plum. **Z**



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US Robotics Sportster Flash

THESE CHAPS ARE ALSO VETERANS OF the modem biz and are very popular with those who run Bulletin Boards Systems (BBSs). As the name would suggest, the Flash is a fast modem with a throughput of 115,200bps. However, the name 'Flash' is actually a reference to the Flash ROM feature which allows you to download upgrades to enable the latest features. The first upgrade offered by US Robotics is one that will speed up the modem from 33.6bps to 56kbps – that's as fast as you can possibly go with data transfer over copper wire phonelines. This will get you moving around the Internet rather than sitting there playing guess the GIF file; it may even give you higher frag counts, improved looks and a big shaft (by that I obviously mean a lightning gun for *Quake* players).

Don't expect to rip open the box and play with a nice collection

of on-line games, because there aren't any, although you do get CompuServe, AOL, Netcom and Virgin Net to get you onto the Internet. On the other hand, you could retrieve that extra dosh from under the mattress and get that copy of *Quake* you've always promised yourself, especially since *QuakeWorld* is now well and truly up and running (and explored in depth in this month's *On-line*).

The Sportster flash may look like some Airfix ready-assembled kit, but beneath that rather plastic exterior beats the heart of a well-assembled piece of

The Sportster Flash can be upgraded from their on-line site.



Score

89

A must for speed freaks and download kings.

Price: £229 Release Date: Out now
Manufacturer: US Robotics
Tel: 0800 225252

dan The People's Choice
Personal Computers

Multitech 33.6 MultiModem

MULTITECH MUST THINK WE'RE ON the verge of WWII. I say this because the build quality of the MultiModem MT2834 ZDX looks like it could withstand a nuclear blast from three feet. It's so solid I reckon you could even play modem football with it – a popular sport I'm endeavouring to promote, using someone else's modem though, naturally.

What it lacks in bundled software it makes up for in ease of use. If you manage to lose the supplied software, you could use the Windows 95 and 3.x generic modem drivers to get going (believe me, I've done it). The box does look rather empty once you've got the modem out, and Multitech would do well to bundle their MultiModem range with at least one game and some on-line software rather than the single floppy disk provided by AOL. They do at least supply a very good COMMS package written specifically for Multitech, so it is guaranteed to work with the modem.

This little modem can get up to 33.6kbps and it does 9,600bps for fax, so it's fine for both business and games; also, by virtue of its robust nature you

could even use it with a laptop to play *Quake* on holiday. Now that's a tempting thought... Z

The Multitech MT2834 ZDX is a great little all-rounder for both work and play.



Score

75

Built to outlast them all – plenty of room for some software though.

Price: £152 Release Date: Out now
Manufacturer: Multitech
Tel: 01734 597774

dan The People's Choice
Personal Computers

Mr PC Super Highway External Modem

I'VE GOT ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA HOW GOOD THIS modem really is. I kid you not, simply because Mr PC didn't want me to look at it. The dialogue between us when I called to request a review sample was brisk to say the least.

"Hello, is that Mr PC?"

"Yes. Who wants to know?"

"It's Mr PC Zone." (A long pause followed.)

"What do you want?"

I said how thrilled our readers would be to hear about Mr PC's marvellous modem. Their reply was abrupt and final.

"No!"

"Pardon?"

"No. We don't want to be associated with a games magazine. Goodbye."

"Bugger."

Please tell me if I'm wrong in thinking that having one of your products reviewed in one of Europe's biggest-selling games magazines is a duff idea. What a bunch of poppies.

Price: £141 Release Date: Out now
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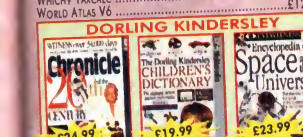
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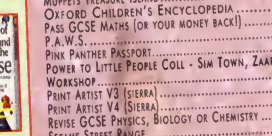
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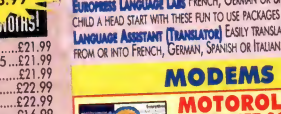
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winning isn't everything! it's who you destroy on the way that counts



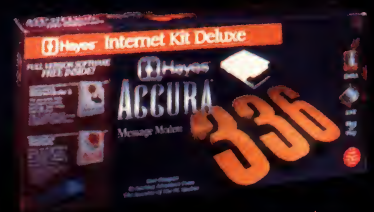
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ZONE

ON-LINE PIPEX

DIAL 90



On-line explosion

WELL, WELL, WELL – IF IT ISN'T THE on-line gaming explosion we've been prophesying here for over 18 months. Why, it seems that every software company and their barber is launching some manner of dial-up, Web-based, server-tastic network game for the Internet. Witness *Meridian 59*, *BattleNet*, *Terris*, *Ultima On-Line*, *Red Alert*, *E-On*, blah de blah de blah. And each and every one is fanfared as the 'first' and 'only' and 'best' multi-player game in history. Hello? HELLO? *Doom*, I might like to say, was the first and the only and the best multi-player game for well over two years. Not much reaction from the industry there. Oh but look, there's *cash* to be made now. And not a small amount of product placement. And presumably there's a bit of retail sales activity too.

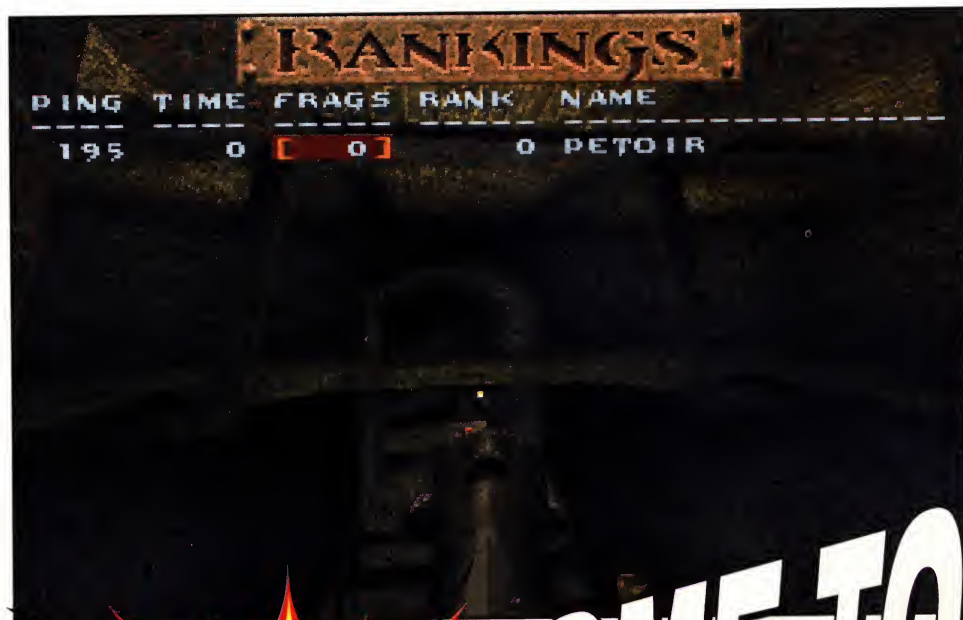
Taking into account this expansion of on-line stuff, not to mention the squadrons of really cool stuff which is due to make an imminent appearance (*Dungeon Keeper*, *X-Wing vs TIE*, *Hexen II* etc), this *PC Zone On-line* section is about to undergo a major league revamp. We don't mind admitting that performance in this section has on occasion been somewhat 'pants-ini'. Then again, it has also, on occasion, been rather 'excellenté'. So, from next month onwards, in distinct collaboration with the hot new *PC Zone Website* (yes, there will finally be one), we'll be taking a hard-nosed look at every single on-line gaming experience around, plus instantaneous reviews of the new ones as they appear. Plus news, files, gossip, bare-naked ladies, offers, deals, discounts, advice, and jokes. Like this:

A: How many Vietnam vets does it take to change a lightbulb?

B: I don't know.

A: That's cuz you weren't there man!
Hahahahahahaha.

David McCandless



If you like Americans, Germans and Euro-quakers, then please move on to the next page – this is war. By far the best multi-player game known to mankind has undergone an incredible face-lift. In fact we hardly recognise the old slag. *Quake*, that tart from Texas, has gone gang war ballistic on-line! Ace-Quaker, **Petolr**, takes us on a tour...

I KNOW GUYS WHO DEDICATE THEIR LIVES TO *Quake*, to the extent that they neglect everything they previously considered to be important. I called an old chum of mine the other day and asked when his busy schedule could accommodate a night of debauchery. Thursday was good for me.

"What about Thursday night?" I enquired.

"Ah, sorry, Quentin, no way I can make it mate – I've got a clan deathmatch on Minos QuakeWorld at eight o'clock."

The embodiment of sadness to some, a new way of life for many others.

We held another vote on Friday night (the beer lost once again) and I decided to join the

aforementioned clan to sample the UK QuakeWorld servers. On the day of

PING	TIME	FRAGS	RANK	NAME
66	17	28	1345	SAURON, NAUT
258	12	24	205	JULIE
388	19	17	0	CHILLER
356	18	14	-319	J. BANDSAW
76	8	9	0	CHARLIE
69	8	9	17	ARATHRANAR
275	7	9	5	DETOIR
70	1	2	1157	SQUEAK, NAUT
501	1	0	-56	SHADOW

TIME: 7:41
PLACE OF TWO DEATHS

The most important part of Quakeworld is the rankings.
Kill lots of people. Get loads of kudos. Simple equation.



QuakeSpy is essential for finding, examining and ultimately avoiding games with too many LPB (Low Ping Bastards).

QuakeWorld's launch in December, I logged on to the US master server, entered my pseudonym, password and received a user ID number. After playing on QuakeWorld for half an hour I was incredibly disappointed – I didn't notice any difference, it was just like any other Internet *Quake* combat session: slow, jerky and pings of around 5-600ms. Mixing these three ingredients together results in the on-line equivalent of suicide. But since the opening of a number of UK QuakeWorld servers, this simple but incredible network and Internet patch for *Quake* is now an absolute must.

We all know a *Quake* deathmatch is fun – decorating every level of *Quake* with the dripping giblets of your fellow work colleagues is an awesome experience. So how do you fancy getting on-line on a global scale, forming your own clan, designing your own skin and playing an Internet modem game at almost Local Area Network Speed? Ooh spoooge!

THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

A UNITED EUROPE: TORY NIGHTMARE OR THE path of wealth and affluence for all. Well, who gives a shit to be honest, but how about a united assault on the warring *Quake* factions across the globe by an army of UK *Quake* clans? It's time to take up arms and show those yanks that expensive local calls aren't



QuakeWorld cake

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Internet account
- 1 copy of the QuakeWorld client software (available on the *Zone* coverdisc)
- 1 copy of registered *Quake* (available from any reliable game stockist)
- 1 mouse (it really is time to forget using the keyboard if you want to venture on-line and tackle the professionals)
- 1 28.8K modem (14.4K=)
- 1 Windows 95 or NT operating system (QuakeWorld is a Win32 application only)
- 1 installed version of Direct X (available on the *Zone* coverdisc)
- 1 warehouse-size pile of space marine giblets, assorted

METHOD

- 1) Open your Internet connection in the usual way.
- 2) Launch the Qspy/QuakeWorld front-end. If Qspy asks you to find *Quake* on your hard drive, don't point it in the direction of *Quake.exe* – you need to click on q95.bat. This batch file comes with *Quake* and launches it using a Windows 95 set-up including the relevant TCP/IP packet drivers.
- 3) Enter your user ID (<newuser> if you're a QuakeWorld virgin and haven't been on before) and password, plus the IP address of the UK QuakeWorld master server you wish to use (you'll find a list of these at the bottom of the page). This master server will store your log-on details and keep a running total of your rank, skill and kills. The rank and skill system works in a very similar

way to goal difference in the premier league – that is to say, the difference between the number of frags you've accumulated against the number of times you've hit the deck nose first. It will also reveal your hit rate percentage and efficiency. A full explanation can be had from the many *Quake* Websites, the best of which again are listed below.

4) The other way to get yourself a QuakeWorld account is rather more complicated, but I seemed to have more success with this method. From the Windows 95 'start task' menu go to 'run' and type: **qwcl -master 194.217.248.86:27000**

This is the IP address for the UK QuakeWorld server @ Minos. Once you're in, type:

newuser <yourpassword>
from the console followed by:
password <yourpassword>

This will bounce back a user ID number. Write this number down – you'll need it every time you want to play QuakeWorld or check your current rank and status.

To play on the Minos server type:

userid <youruser ID number>
password <yourpassword>
connect 194.217.248.86

And that's it – you should jump into your first QuakeWorld game, where every frag, gib and suicide will impact your overall prestige. Be careful out there...



Another combatant falls before the mighty Petoir. Actually there are three corpses there. Most impressive.

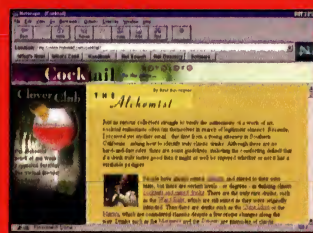


Blood is cool. Blood rocks. Axe spews blood. Blood smears walls. Walls coated in blood. Love blood. Blood is love.



Cool places to visit

http://www.hotwired.com/cocktail/
HotWired – the on-line incarnation of day-glo cyberpunk mag *Wired* – is, apparently, not all digital economy, friction-free capitalism and dire celebrations of body-pierced Web designers ("Oh look, another Prince Albert"). In fact, there's a most excellent Cocktails section. Not only does this detail the history and ingredients of the most popular and obscure cocktails, it also sports a 'party maker'. You enter the number of guests and the booze you have, and it returns with a list of cool cocktails for you to



construct on a budget. Er, for our under-18 readers, there's also a sizeable section of non-alcoholic drinkies too.

http://www.happypuppy.com/games/faqcht/
If you're rubbish at games (and let's be brutally honest, you probably are), the Internet can serve as a useful resource for those we used to call 'shandies', 'badminton players' and 'inhabitants of Gutless Gully'. More contemporaneous than a magazine and uploaded by sad, pale, see-thru addicts of the games, is HappyPuppy's tips emporium. Here, listed in easy A-Z fashion with old games such as *X-Wing* and *Doom* rubbing shoulders with *Syndicate Wars* and *Diablo*, you'll find many many pages of tips, cheats, hints,



and downright outrageous tactics. Check it aht. (It also has loads of really cool links to other cool stuff).

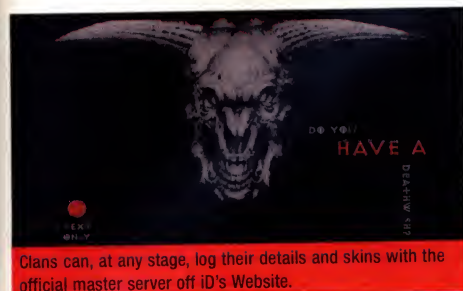
http://www.powernethk.com/~gobeyond/gamesindex.html

Links, links, links. Links are what makes the Internet go round. To the uninitiated, they are the signposts that lead you to more interesting places. For the fully initiated they are badges of status. The more links on your homepage, the greater the Netnerd you are (and the smaller your social life is). But quantity does not necessarily mean quality. Try the above URL for example. It's a short but good list of all things gamey on the Net (on-line games, magazines, tips etc) all compiled in one text-only page, and not some piss-poor 700K 3D virtual universe. This is what we like.





Mad clans: most *Quake* teams have started their own Web pages. Content: lots of shouting about how good they are. Verdict: Zzzz.



going to stop us from dominating the QuakeWorld rankings, and that no German frag-meistering via an ISDN line shall thwart our efforts. No sirree.

I've managed to play a few QuakeWorld games on servers across the globe and the difference in communication and playing styles between the players, from country to country, varies enormously. So I decided to visit a few foreign QuakeWorld servers to see if I could stir up a bit of trouble.

USA 09:35 GMT: My first port of call was the Disruptor server in the US, where in-game conversations are usually shallow and violent in content. I thought I'd try to be as abusive as

possible – it's a good starting point and usually leads to an incredible deathmatch game, fuelled by real hatred and malice.

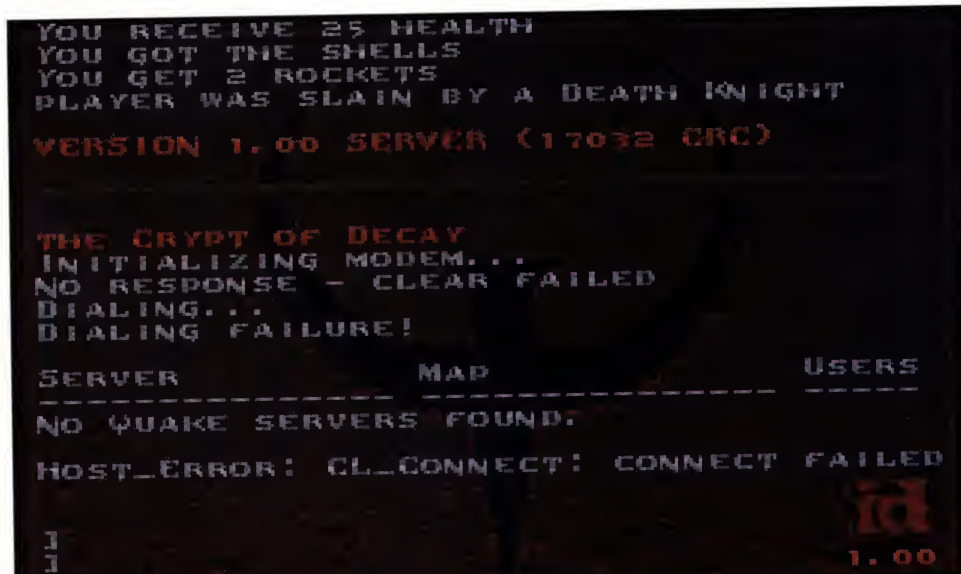
Seeing as I was dialling the States, I thought I'd start off with a comment involving an adversary's mother. I found that "Your mother sucks gibs in hell" tended to evoke some kind of violent response upon the 'limey' arsehole. But as my "Yeah, and your ma..." comments got worse, the game improved. I left, winning by a clear 12 frags to hails of abuse, "Queen-loving cocksmoker" being my favourite. I'm still not sure though whether he meant the band or the monarch...

**CLAN
ADVISORY
RUTHLESS BASTARDS**

Germany 10:12 GMT: During my frag-fest journey to Germany it took me an age to spark any reactions. I think everyone was far too busy logging their



The deadly 'pus gun' reaps another victim. Globules of super-heated microbacterial lymphocytes can be deadly.



Disconnect: The worst thing that can happen when mid-game. Re-enter, and your frag count will be relegated to zero.

QuakeWorld resources

For more news and info on *Quake* and QuakeWorld, here's two of the best related Websites:

<http://www.bluesnews.com>
<http://www.stomped.com>

Check your current skill and position in the world of *Quake* by going to this fantastic results service page for the globe:

<http://www.vir.com/~phetu/barf.html>.

By the way, the average skill of American players on Disruptor (a huge master server) is 1147.9. On Minos UK our average skill level is 1143.8. So get on-line and make the difference.

If you want to play the excellent *Capture The Flag*, there is now a UK server at:

<http://www.dcs.napier.ac.uk/~st5029/>.

This patch is now available to play via QuakeWorld. Meanwhile, the main US server for *Capture The Flag* is at:

<http://quake.threewave.com/capture.shtml>

And of course:

<http://www.idsoftware.com>

for new files and clan info. If you want to get your mates together and form a clan, send your clan and skin to id – they will then release new skin updates on a regular basis.

rating and skill numbers into an Excel spreadsheet to notice my shouts of "You vill all bow to the neu uber gibmeister" and "Beware my sausage seeking rocket". Anyway, I got absolutely slaughtered by this German guy with a penchant for English *Quake* players who spend too much time typing in messages when they should be clocking up frags. Doh!

Great Britain 11:58 GMT: Britain had to be in here somewhere and was by far the funniest of all three games. I played on the Demon Public server and started the ball rolling with a "I have never seen so many shit *Quake* players in all my

Better the devil you know? On-line you're anonymous.

« life”. This didn't go down too well and I soon found myself involved in a battle consisting of 15 players to one, with me as the lone ranger, of course.

Each time I died I received a “Twat” message. So I decided to simply lie on the floor, dead, and type in abuse. The whole game stopped and *Quake* became nothing more than a graphically impressive Internet relay chat application. The abusive conversations continued for 15 minutes and ended with one of the best deathmatch games I've ever participated in. Thanks guys.

ESSENTIAL LINGO

THERE NOW FOLLOWS A LIST OF ESSENTIAL console commands you should learn before embarking on a *QuakeWorld* career.

Ping: A ping is the time in milliseconds relating to the speed of your connection. If you have a ping of 500, this effectively means your firing and movement delay will be around half a second – not good. Look for pings of 250 and below for a decent game.

Pushlatency: This is the most important – and you should learn to use and adore it. The Pushlatency command basically adjusts the client side of the connection (that's you) and compensates for your lack of connection speed (or latency) by making minor differences to your playing experience. You may have to adjust your playing style to allow for these changes, but they're only minor ones. For

example, you may notice a slight lack of solidity when you run into other players, or a slight mouse button to rocket launch delay.

Once you're on-line, hit the TAB key to bring up a list of all players in the level (including yourself) and look at your ping. Remember: the lower the ping the faster the connection.

Set Pushlatency from the console to a negative value of this number. For example, if your ping is 190ms, lower the console and type <Pushlatency -190>. This will then attempt to predict your movements 190ms in the past.

Rate: Not entirely sure about this one, but it apparently relates

to something iD call NetRate. However, John Carmack (who programmed the *Quake* engine and most of the *QuakeWorld* code), posted a mail message on bluesnews which told us that typing <rate 2000> would give players an increased Net performance. And indeed, who are we to argue?

R_netgraph: Displays a graph of your network connection stability. The higher the peaks, the worse your connection. It's troughs you're looking for here, not peaks. Use this command by typing: <r_netgraph 1> to display the graph and <r_netgraph 0> to turn it off.

User: Displays a player's current record. Use their user ID number for this. <user 2120> will display the user record for player number 2120, or you can use their user name. <user tokay> will display the current standing of somebody who's very good (damn their eyes).

Setinfo: Sets a value to your account:
setinfo skin <skin name>
setinfo clan <clan skin>
setinfo email somegeezzer@somedomain.co.uk
setinfo topcolor <#>
setinfo bottomcolor <#>

Seen: Shows you what a person was last seen doing in the *QuakeWorld* network for the particular master you're using. For example, 'seen 2120' will show you what user 2120 was last up to in *QuakeWorld*.

Skins: Refreshes your library of skins and updates the game session if any new users enter the game using a skin you have not downloaded. Simply type <skins>.

Serverinfo: Displays all the variables, patches and information for the server you're presently connected to.

Disconnect: Er, disconnects you. **Z**

QuakeWorld User Information

Login info: User ID: 8790, User Name: petoir, Password: *****

Shirt & pants: 4, 4

Rank: 6

Last Seen: petoir (uid: 8790) was last seen being killed by Chiller (uid: 8949) on 194.217.248.86:27500 on Wed Jan 29 12:49:46

Skin: cthulhu1

Custom Keys:

Key	Value
*d...	12
*ef...	60 %
*fr...	18
*skill	1044
*us...	8790
*la...	193...
color	4

Buttons: Add, Edit, Delete

The *QuakeWorld* front-end allows you to track your activities, control your skin type, and see which git last killed you.



One thing *QuakeWorld* guarantees is a proliferation of silly, silly names. To wit: BrevityDeath, OnionBoy, Sasanach and Shalom.

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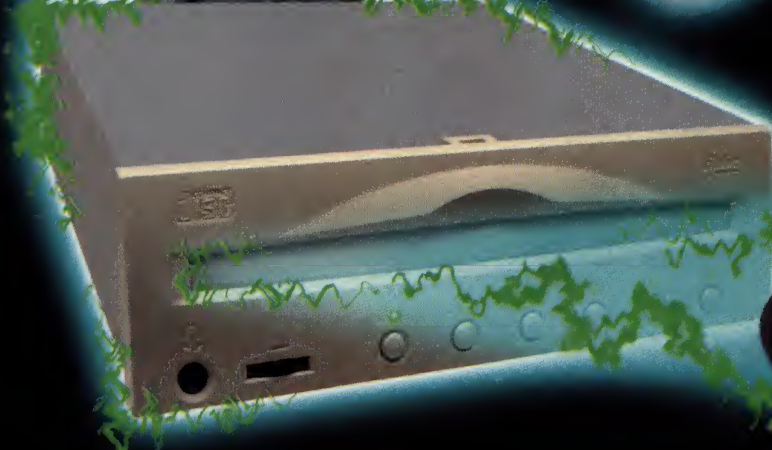
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any similarity between the plot of this serial and the motion picture "TRON" is purely coincidental, really.

by charlie brooker

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 Blah blah Hex blah blah virtual world blah blah
 blah Shambler blah Wombles blah Spice Girls blah
 blah thin bloke from 'Everything But The Girl' blah blah
 pointless blah blah blah blah

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SO...

COME ON!! GET OUT OF THERE!! OI!! OI!!!

WH-WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?

FEELS LIKE SOME KIND OF QUAKE...

MMMM... IT'S THE KIND OF DILEMMA WHICH DEMANDS DEEP THOUGHT AND CAREFUL PLANNING...

WHACK WHACK

POW! HO HO HOW IRONIC

POP!

HEX! JOE!

I WUV YOU I WUV YOU TOO

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HI... I'D JUST LIKE TO ASK... WHAT DO HUMAN INNARDS TASTE LIKE?

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Legacy 46	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 47	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 48	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 49	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 50	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 51	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
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Legacy 53	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 54	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 55	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 56	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 57	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
Legacy 58	29.99		Goblins 1 & 2	9.99	Monopoly	24.99	Shatters	9.99	Wipe Out 2097	Call		
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TROUBLESHOOTER

The reason we've never printed a picture of the miserable Boggit is because he's got a face that only a mother could love. Actually, when his mum gave birth to him the doctor smacked her!

Write to PC Zone

If you have a query concerning a role-playing game or adventure, or you have a hot tip or a cheat to share, then write to:

The Boggit
29 Blackthorn Drive
Larkfield, Aylesford
KENT ME20 6NR



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READ THIS!

Because our tips line is so busy, and because the man who answers the phone is only a mere mortal, we need you to prove that you have actually bought the magazine and that you're not just a freeloading blagger. To do this, our tips geezer will ask you for a password before you request your tip. This month's password is... "I can't believe it's not Buddha!"



THE Boggit's Mailbag



(Above) Tunnel vision in *Eye Of The Beholder*.

Eye Of The Beholder II

What's does the message 'Leave many things' on one of the lower levels and 'The Mark of Darkmoon' on level 1 mean?

Hadden Bramham, London

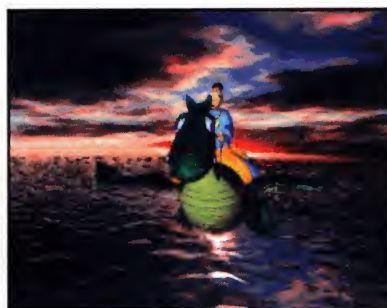
If you think of the floor tiles as the face of a dice, then you need to place a single object on each of the corners and one in the middle – making the number five. When you've done that the door will open.

The Mark of Darkmoon is a brand burned into the palm of your hand and you'll get this on level 3 of the Silver Tower.

Little Big Adventure

I've killed all the mutants, got out of the factory and now have to find a blue key-card. The Elf at the shuttle building told me if I set his brother free he'd give me one, but I can't find my damn catamaran!

Shams Khan



(Right) *Little Big Adventure*: Don't take the catamaran, take the dragon – it's quicker!

I'd lay money on the fact that you don't recognise your letter now, do you Shams? That's because it took me an hour to edit out the naughty bits. Your grannie would be ashamed of you!

The catamaran is found in Port-Beluga on Principal Island, and you'll have to pay 200 Kashes to get it.

Gabriel Knight

I'm stuck in day 10 and require your assistance. So far Gabriel and Mosely have had a chat, and Gabriel seems to have an idea of what to do next – but unfortunately I don't. Please help!

DB Mackay, Edinburgh

You must now make your way to St. Louis Cathedral and enter the right-hand confessional on the left of the cathedral. Put the rod and signal device under the bench. Leave, open the door on the right using the keypad and enter the outer hallway of the Secret Hounfour.

Look at the signs above the doorways. You can now enter the rooms using the keypad. Begin with the Supply Room – room 7.

Ultima 8

I've found Stratos but now have to pass the Test of Wisdom, and I can't! Can you please help me with this?

Michael Farrugia, Melbourne

What's this? An Australian who can't pass a Test of Wisdom! I find that very difficult to believe. On the other hand...

The questions change each time you take the test so what I'll do is give you all of the answers and let you select the one you need from the list. Do you reckon you could do that? The answers are:

Remain quiet; tend the injured; my sight; a weapon destroys; wit builds; the battle is lost; honesty; welcome him home; truthful testimony; an evening on a breezy porch; comfort a sad child.

Jurassic Park

I've bought the CD-ROM version of this game and looked through the back issues of PC Zone to find the level access codes, only to find that they don't work on my machine. The codes that we have actually managed to get to work are:

G37EF8D1, 4D9458D1, and 15AC78D1. We'd be very grateful if you could solve our problem for us – it's a shame because so far the game's been a waste of time and money as far as we're concerned because we've only been able to play a few levels.

RK Hargrave, Kidderminster



Well, I don't normally answer questions on silly arcade games in this section, but I'm in a good mood (unusual for me!) so here's what you need to know.

The following codes are for the CD-ROM version only, levels 5-10:

13AE78D1, 72AF98D1, FDC478D1,
9DC498D1, BDC4B8D1, 5DC4D8D1

Ripper

Do you want to be bald? Do you want a reason to buy some new underwear, simply because your brown and yellow 3-pack of Y-fronts just aren't you? If you've answered 'Yes' to either of these, then I suggest you go and buy *Ripper*.

I've pulled my hair out with this game and completely filled my pants as I can't be buggered to get out of my chair and go to the toilet. I need help!

James McGowan, Bolton

Yes, well... we won't go into the state of my head or my other end at the present. Let's just give you, and all of the other sad gits who keep writing to me about this game, a complete list of passwords and hope it makes you all go away.

Wofford Well	Vulcan
Catherine's Well	Horoscope
Falconetti's Well	Circus Maximus
Web Runners Well	Anachrony station
Falcon Eddie Well	Leather apron
Kane's Well	Digital eden
Isis Well	Psy bard
Weapon One,	
Two and Three Wells	Pegasus, Orestes, Odysseus
Berman Well	Berman4
Anti-viral Well	Exterminator
Warp Space	Warp

Discworld II

I'm just one of millions who'll want to know how to get the ladders from Casanunder in Discworld II.

Steven Presho, Peterlee

Casanunder will give you a ladder if you introduce him to a woman 'comatose enough to listen to him'. Talk to him first about ladders then go to the Mortuary and look at Granny Weatherwax. Now go back to the Troll's head and tell Casanunder about her.

While we're talking about Discworld, here's another hint for Act IV which involves finding sand for the hourglass. The trick here is to place a rotten arm in the saddle-bags of the other traveller - now you can trace the traveller by simply following the vultures. When you come to the Fountain of Youth you must place the cork in the fountain which will enable you to fill the hourglass with sand from the bottom of the trough.



(Above left) It's a race against time in *Jurassic Park*: will the little guy or the dinosaur family get to their side of the screen first?

I thought we agreed that you weren't going to read this bit any more? How are you going to make your dear old Mum proud of you if you cheat every time the going gets tough?

Shattered Steel

Multi-player cheat codes
PLAYCD<TRACK NUMBER>

Plays an audio cd track

EJECT

Ejects player bot

SKY<NUMBER>

Changes sky colour (you must change screen resolution to take effect)

Single-player cheat codes

GONZLES	Speeds up bot
RAGNAROK	Blows player bot's head off!
SMITE	Destroys target
CAPONE	Spawns five gnats to help you
HENCHMAN	Spawns a shiva to help you
BLIPPLEBLOOPS	Rapid laser
RATSNES	Medium laser
NUMBERCHANGER	Rolling mine
CGQ	Large rocket pack GFY
KWAHAMOT	Rapid missiles
BUMSAUCE	Heavy laser
HARDCODE	30mm gatling
BIGONES	70mm gatling
LOCKANDLOAD	Gives max ammo
IMOUTTAHERE	Complete mission
RODRIGO	Spawns two choppers
CHERNOBYL	Nuke!

Cyberia 2

Here's a selection of handy hints for the puzzles in this game:

1. How do I get past the touch tone lock in the Research Mines?

Answer: the code is 3108.

2. What is the code for Corbin's computer?

Answer: The code for Corbin's computer is yellow-green-blue.

3. What do I need from Corbin's VR database?

Answer: The exact fingerprint match access code is 6307.

4. How do I get into the mine?

Answer: As soon as you enter the mine hallway, turn to your right, go forward and switch off the lights. The darkness will reveal laser beams which you will have to navigate around.

5. How do I use the lock to connect the bridge?

Answer: Use the sequence 2-4-1-5.

Settlers 2

Save your Campaign game, right at the beginning of an episode. End that game and start a free play one - it doesn't matter which, but make sure you set exploration 'off' so you can see

all of the map and enemies etc. Load your Campaign game from within the free play game, and BINGO! You can see everything, including the position of the gate.

Warning: This cheat makes the game unstable and it will crash if you go into messages and click the top right (current mission) icon. Your best bet is to make a note of where everything is, end the game and load it again from the main menu. In the campaign missions everything is always in the same place, or so it seems.

(Submitted by Elvis Presley, Garway!!!)

MegaRace 2

Okay speed freaks, here's how you can grab pole position and stay there! Run the game from the DOS prompt and add on the cheat words you want activated (eg <MEGARACE SPEED MONEY MAP>).

SPEED	Speeds up your car
MONEY	Gives you loads a money!
MAP	Displays a complete map while you're racing
GAME	Skip the boring intro and jump straight to the action
NOLANCE	Gets rid of Lance Boyle

Ultima VIII

This little cheat requires you to edit the contents of the file AVATAR.DAT in the GAMEDAT directory. (Make a copy of the file before you start. Just in case...)

From the DOS prompt, in the GAMEDAT directory, type:

```
DEBUG AVATAR.DAT
e 12a 01 01
w
Q
```

Next time you start the game the cheat modes will be available. Activate the mode by a single left-mouse click on your character. Press <CTRL/F> to display the help menu.

(Submitted by Gunnar Eieiksson, Iceland)



Companions Of Xanth

Pressing <ALT/F10> during play reveals a cheat menu which will make things a lot easier than having to run around doing all those boring difficult bits which makes the game last a long time.

Batman Forever

When you get the message 'game activated', type <LULLABY> to choose what level you want to play. You'll also find that if you press <F10> once the bad guys are down for the count and you can use all the weapons. **Z**

(Above right)
Companions Of Xanth:
"You said you wanted a tropical holiday - whaddya mean you want a hotel as well?"

Syndicate Wars

Part 2

Last month we armed you with the general hints and tips which any EuroCorp agent will need to master to become a successful field agent. To round off our guide to *Syndicate Wars* and help you become truly invincible we're taking a close look at the actual strategies you'll require to complete some of the initial missions, after which you'll be able to pull yourself up by your own shoulder harness to get through the final couple.

EuroCorp Mission 3 – Hong Kong

Equipment required: Persuadertron

Don't get involved! Spend some time building up your powers of persuasion until you're powerful enough to persuade the scientists. Find the green unattended car and use it to gain entrance to the scientists' compound.

EuroCorp Mission 3 – Beijing

Equipment required: Mini-guns, Persuadertron

Once again use the Persuadertron to build up your powers before you attempt to convert your targets. Use the super-shield option to rush forward into persuasion distance. Move forward to clear enemy agents before bringing your captives into the firing range, as they tend to get bumped off very easily.

(Right) Oooh! What a lovely looking shop. I wonder what they sell in there? Small, green toads?



Try to capture some high explosives because the local bank will disgorge lots of funds when cracked open.

EuroCorp Mission 4 – Geneva

Equipment required: Mini-guns, Persuadertron

Shoot on sight anyone who looks even remotely hostile. There's an executive in possession of lots of money who you should seek out and then lighten his load. You'll recognise him by his accompanying guards.

Hint: The Church enclosure is a trap, so keep well away.

EuroCorp Mission 4 – Matochkin Shar

Equipment required: Persuadertron, explosives, knockout gas

As soon as you arrive, destroy the gate with the explosives and grab a hover car. Persuade the Bluesky security guards to join you as you're going to need help to protect the scientists.

Deal with the ambush waiting for you

at the IML before the scientists get there. A zealot convoy is on its way into the city: take some of the cash it's carrying.

EuroCorp Mission 4 – Vancouver

Equipment required: Persuadertron

Head for the elevated car park and destroy the unguided. Wait around until a car arrives that you can commandeer. Now you can attack the compounds – pick the largest one first to find a useful flying vehicle. Now we're airborne it's time to go to church and pick off the bad guys from the air. Search the bodies for a flamer. Now it's time to go look for the scientists.

EuroCorp Mission 5 – Singapore

Equipment required: Long-range rifles, knockout gas

If you don't have long-range rifles with you, first make sure you relieve someone else of theirs. Snipe out the enemy guards from a distance, then

(Below and right) Think carefully before splitting up your agents – they could easily be picked off by a sniper.





(Left and above) Taking out the local bank will give you some much needed cash. Keep any captives well out of harms way, though.

retreat if they mount a counterattack. Knockout gas will prove handy to take out massed retaliation. You really don't want to let any of the enemy get into the truck, so as soon as you have created a way in, make a dash for it yourself.

Hint: There is an Ion Mine to be found in this mission, so have a scout around.

EuroCorp Mission 6 – Phoenix

Equipment required: Knockout gas, mini-guns
Go first to mop up the punks robbing the bank and pick up the money which is lying nearby. You're going to need lots of knockout gas and heavy firepower to fight off the waves of unguided soldiers. At the zealots' stronghold you will have to deal with guards both outside and in. Once the inner guards start to get beat they will call for air support, and if they still get their asses kicked they'll release crazy gas. A smart strategy is to lure them out of their defences and deal with them outside.

Hint: There is a neat disrupter to be found on this mission.

EuroCorp Mission 7 – Rome

Equipment required: Long-range rifles, high explosives

The trick here is to use the punks' own weaponry to destroy them. As soon as you make an appearance in their stronghold they will order up some satellite rain, so on no account should you hang around waiting for it. Dart in, make someone's day, and get out before the explosions start. Now you can use sniper tactics to take out the spider droids in the smaller compound nearby. Head for the area under the control of the unguided on the other side of the map, but don't linger on the ground level as gas will be released at an early stage. It's a good idea to steal a vehicle from here as you're going to need it later on to get inside the syndicate base. Use the car as a shield in the base as there's lots of enemy firepower

protecting the entrance.

You must locate the agent who is to be found in a corner of the compound. Remember to blow up the bank and take the money.

Hint: There is a Cerberus IFF to be found in the compound.

EuroCorp Mission 10 – New York

Equipment required: Persuadertron, launchers, long-range rifles

Begin in the eastern section of the map and destroy the five security guards. Be prepared for an air attack soon afterwards. Beware of the taxi as it has explosives onboard and you don't want to be anywhere near it when it goes bang. Pick up any lasers as they will bring a dividend at the mission's end.



(Left) Remember that any enemy agent you manage to 'persuade' in the field will be placed into deep freeze when you return to base. Should you need fresh blood and skills later on, simply pop down to the freezer and select a stiff that suits your needs.

(Below) I love the smell of knockout gas – just one whiff takes care of all your troubles!



Head east once more until you detect a large enemy force, then resort to sniper action to whittle down their numbers. Watch out for agents carrying explosives. Locate and head for the armoured car which is further east.

A civilian will appear from the south, and he must be neutralised with extreme sanction; he is not what he seems however – he's carrying a clone shield and will destroy the car which is essential to your mission. Use the car to enter the target compound. You're going to need rifles to take out the defenders, as well as launchers to survive the air attack which will definitely be called in.

EuroCorp Mission 11 – Santiago

Equipment required: Persuadertron, long-range rifles, launchers

Find the zealot compound where the flying vehicle is located – but beware of the enemy snipers in nearby buildings. You will be attacked by two flying vehicles, so take them out before you actually take over the spare flying vehicle as you don't want to get its paintwork scratched. Get airborne then approach your target, taking out all ground-based zealots before you land.

EuroCorp Mission 11 – Cape Town

Equipment required: Persuadertron, razor wire, high explosives, launchers, long-range rifles

Avoid the initial punks who attack you, as they are wired to explode. Head for the IML, then use the high explosive to blow a gap in the wall near to your target. Once you are in control of the situation, disperse the razor wire around the temple entrance to slow everyone else down. Persuade your target to join you, then leggit!

EuroCorp Mission 11 – Adelaide

Equipment required: Persuadertron, launchers, long-range rifles

First clear the surrounding area of any threats, then move towards the temple. Dispose of the guards, grab your man and leave. Make sure that you keep a



(Above and left) Watch out for crazies on suicide missions – they'll take your whole team out in a flash.

« weather eye out for razor wire back at the IML or you'll find yourself in deep trouble – some sneaky swine has laid out a surprise for you.

EuroCorp Mission 11 – Buenos Aires

Equipment required: Persuadertron, launchers, long-range rifles, high explosives, razor wire

Things are hot from the very start in this mission, so when things start to rock, and airborne attacks begin, take cover in buildings.

Distribute lots of razor wire around the base to slow down the zealots' attacks or you'll suffer heavy casualties.

When things are finally under control there are rich pickings to be made in this particular mission. There is a well-stocked bank to be taken out, and a clone shield to be found. There is a long building which you must blast your way into that contains a special skin that your research scientists would give their bunsen burners for.

EuroCorp Mission 12 – Christchurch

Equipment required: Persuadertron, launchers, long-range rifles

Get ready to rumble! From square one they'll be coming at you thick and fast in this mission. The bad guys now have launchers to deal with, so you'll have to learn to recharge your weapons while dodging in and out of buildings. To make things even more difficult than they already are you're working against the clock in this scenario, as some wicked church zealots will turn up as the time runs out.

When you've done this, finish by taking the IML to Reykjavik.

EuroCorp Mission 13 – Reykjavik

Equipment required: Long-range rifles, launchers

There are three zealots guarding the compound – one of whom is carrying loads of explosives. Time it right and you can kill him in such a way that he can take his two companions with him when he explodes. Inside the compound you'll encounter heavily-armed zealots, so hang back and use sniper tactics wherever possible. There is one zealot who must be brought down before he reaches the research silos – he's on a suicide mission, and if he makes it, your mission will fail. Keep an eye out for a flying vehicle full of zealots which will land soon.

There is a zealot guarding the scientists and he will be difficult to deal with inside a building, so scare the scientists outside by running at them. The zealot will follow and you can then dispose of him more easily.

EuroCorp Mission 13 – Nuuk

Equipment Required: Lots of knockout gas, long-range rifles

This is another hard mission and you'll need your wits about you as you have to continually snipe and run. Use your

knockout gas and mini-guns to dispose of those who get too close.

There are some flying vehicles you can capture and then use to drop knockout gas. When you land, use mini-guns to dispose of the remaining zealots, then prepare to take on the advancing spider droids with the long-range weapons.

EuroCorp Mission 14 – London

Equipment required: Cerberus IFF, knockout gas, launchers, long-range rifles

Have one agent prepare an IFF on the car park side of Drennan. Have two agents set up theirs to the north of the executives, and lastly set one up in the car park.

With the police to assist you, control the area around your headquarters until Drennan arrives. Protect Drennan with some of your men while the others go to the data vault. Get Drennan to the podium and things will be okay.

EuroCorp Mission 15 – Tokyo

Equipment required: High explosives, long-range rifles

Make sure you keep hiding in buildings to recharge your energy once the bad guys arrive in the flying vehicles. Ignore



(Below) Look! A car park full of unattended cars. Why walk the mean streets when you can ride in air-cushioned comfort? Of course you should check out the state of its shields first, 'cos if it's a dog one shot can put you and all of your team out of the game.





(Above and left) Buildings are just for blowing up. Use them to hide in and recharge your energy before you get completely wiped out.

the mass of unguided individuals who will appear in the main street as they have no value.

Destroy the flying vehicles near to where Drennan is, then take out the nearby patrols. Beware of the gun turrets at the entrance, and instead use explosives to blow your way in near to Drennan.

EuroCorp Mission 15 - Bangkok

Equipment required: Nothing special
Go north and handle the advancing zealots, then get back to Drennan as quickly as you can; if you don't return soon enough he panics and runs off on his own. Take Drennan and head north again. You must get your skates on as there are five zealots in front of you who will call up more reinforcements if they're not dispatched with extreme prejudice! Do keep an eye on Drennan as the bad guys will concentrate all their firepower on him, and even more zealots will come swarming from the west. Move north-west and kill another bunch who are located in a group of buildings. Go west to a clearing where there is a large vehicle packed with zealots. These zealots can be cleared using long-range rifles. **Z**

Okay, we've done our bit - now it's up to you. If all of this serious training doesn't turn you into the Department's meanest sonofabitch that ever walked the dark streets of Cybertown, we give up.



(Left) Standing around in the middle of the road while you exchange bullets with a police vehicle comes under the general heading of 'Stupid'. Keep your weapons hidden under your coat, avoid all eye contact with the Fuzz, and remember not to jaywalk.

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The ONLY automatic joystick selector you'll ever need

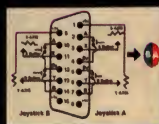
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Patent Pending



Although most PCs have only one game port the design actually supports two joysticks (A & B). Advanced sticks that sport four buttons, throttle and rudder controls or coolie caps, make use of the second joystick (B) controls. When two sticks are connected only two fire buttons per stick are available.



In two player mode, both joysticks can be activated at the same time for two-player games. However, due to the design of the IBM joystick port, the advanced functions of the joysticks are not supported.



Select single player mode and the AlfaTwin allows you to switch between two joysticks. In this mode, all the functions of the stick are supported. To select your stick, simply press the fire button of the controller you wish to use.



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AlfaCommander Pro



AlfaPilot Plus

Leading joystick manufacturer says:

"Just to let you know that the AlfaTwin joystick switch arrived intact. At this moment I have connected 7 (1) joysticks to the AlfaTwin - and it works perfectly."

Computer --- AlfaTwin --- Gravis Phoenix
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Edo Oskam, Technical Support Specialist (Gravis Europe/Westland)



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BUYERS' GUIDE

Subdivided by genre

Welcome to the **PC Zone Buyers' Guide**. Here you'll find many of the games we've reviewed over the last 12 months, as well as those we feel should go down in gaming history as Classics.

ACTION

ABSOLUTE ZERO 70

Domark, £39.99

Sub-standard Wing Commander clone which needs loads of HD space.

R36 PD36

ALIEN TRILOGY 79

Acclaim, £39.95

Popular psx first-person shooter that, for all its light-sourcing, is somewhat dated, repetitive and too easy compared to Quake.

R56 PD56

AMOK 79

GT Interactive, £TBC

Another HERC-based third-person viewed shoot 'em up. It's hard, and looks quite nice.

R 48

ARCHIMEDEAN DYNASTY 92

Blue Byte, £44.99

An underwater mercenary combat game, sort of like Wing Commander IV with submarines (but not expensive FMV sequences). Interesting mission structures, a good plot, and proper underwater currents to deal with, all in gorgeous true 3D. Think Stingray (but without 'Aqua' Marina and Peter Lorre).

R56 PD56

ASSAULT RIGS 78

Psygnosis, £34.99

Playable but rather formulaic psx-converted platform game in a tank. Network options.

R39



BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 83

FunSoft, £34.99

Pretty good psx conversion of a good-looking beat 'em up which runs well without a 3D accelerator card. The gameplay's a bit too fireball-orientated, but if you must have it...

R40 PD37

BLAMI MACHINEHEAD 77

EIDOS, £39.99

Another psx-converted, first-person shooty thing, this time with you strapped to a hovering nuclear warhead. Playable enough.

R56

BUBBLE BOBBLE 80

Acclaim/Taito, £29.95

The retro mania continues apace with this re-release of Bubble Bobble and Rainbow Islands. Arcade perfect, with cute music and lots of cakes...

R45

CANNON FODDER 90

Virgin Interactive, £24.99

Great fun. Action-orientated forerunner to the likes of Command & Conquer and Z.

R14 PD13, 28 T18, 37

CHAOS ENGINE 80

Renegade, £32.99

Multi-directional scrolling, top-down, manic shoot 'em up action.

R20 T21

CRUSADER 91

Origin/Electronic Arts, £49.99

Action, adventure, problem-solving, strategy and people getting their heads blown off all rolled into one in this isometric-viewed, futuristic shoot 'em up.

R35 T38, 39 T56, 57



CYBERIA 2 80

Interplay, £44.95

If you liked the first game, you'll like this. Your quest (just for a change) is to save the world via the usual mix of arcade shooty bits and crap 'adventure' bits.

R51

DARK FORCES 95

LucasArts/Virgin, £54.99

Wonderfully atmospheric Doom-isation of Star Wars that many people preferred to Doom itself. Great graphics, tricky puzzles, true 3D levels and stirring tunes - and you get to shoot Stormtroopers' heads off.

R24 PD25, 29 T27

DESCENT 2 90

Interplay, £39.99

Hardened Descenders will find enough to test them, but there's a learning curve for newcomers too. New weapons, monsters and great sound effects, plus 'Capture the Flag' team games. Great stuff.

R37 PD37 T51

DESERT STRIKE 78

C = Classic **R** = Recommended **P** = Pants

R = reviewed (issue number)

PD = playable demo on cover (Issue number)

RD = rolling demo on cover disk (Issue number)

LE = level editor (Issue number)

T = tips or solution (Issue number)

Gremlin, £34.99

Playable but rather ropey conversion of MegaDrive's strategic 'copter shoot 'em up.

R20 T40



DOOM 96

ID Software, £29.99

Surely you know this one! If you're still after levels for it though, we had 130 on Issue 17's cover disk, 500+ on Issue 21's, and about the same on Issue 25's. And it's free on Issue 28's. See also Ultimate Doom, further on.

R13, PD28, LE15 T12, 19

DUKE NUKEM 3D 93

US Gold, £44.99

A Doom-clone that actually manages to be more inventive and entertaining than the original. Full registered version has some cool new weapons and nastier enemies, a level designer, and the facility to convert Doom-wads into Duke maps. It's funny, too.

R40 PD11 T38, 39, 42 LE48

FADE TO BLACK 94

Electronic Arts, £44.99

The follow-up to Flashback - outstanding graphics, fancy spinnies-around polygon bits, and a level of difficulty that's up there with licking your own anus. All the elements of the original - and it's in 3D!

R31

FINAL DOOM 62

GT Interactive, £44.95

Last attempt to wring more money from anyone who hasn't heard of Duke or Quake. The levels are quite good, it's hi-res and supports Internet play, and it runs under Wings.

R42

FIRESTORM: THUNDERHAWK 2 60

Core Design, £39.99

Below-par helicopter shoot 'em up with pop-up mountains.

R36

FLASHBACK 89

US Gold, £9.99

Beautifully animated platform game with nightmarishly hard foes and treacherous traps. Varied locations include a killing gameshow - it's not easy and the complicated controls only work well with a gamepad.

R6 T7

FX FIGHTERS 93

Philips, £39.99

One of the best 3D beat 'em ups on the pc. Loads of moves, atmospheric graphics and fighters ranging from snappy-limbed insects through pneumatic-breasted women/cat hybrids to giant turd monsters. Cool.

R29 PD30 T31, 32

HERETIC 78

ID/Raven, £39.99

Doom in tights.

R25 PD24 T26

HEXEN 94

ID, £39.99

One stage up from Doom in terms of gameplay, it's essentially a simplified RPG with a less linear approach and an improved game engine that lets you look up and down. Great-looking, extremely involving, with an eight-player deathmatch facility.

R33 (booklet)

IMPERIAL PURSUIT 80

LucasArts, £19.99

X-Wing add-on: long, involving, 'story-driven' tour of duty.

R7 T3

INFERNO 88

Ocean, £44.99

Slick space combat thingy that branches out into sub-aqua combat thingy and even planet surface hovey combat thingy. Cut-scenes, reasonable graphics, fine explosions, booming sfx and pilot aids galore.

R20 PD25

JUNGLE STRIKE 79

Gremlin, £39.99

Follow-up to Desert Strike, the same but with more trees.

R26 PD25

KLIK 'N' PLAY 88

Europress, £39.99

It's not a game as such, but a game designer for Windows that lets you make the sort of sick, unpleasant action fests that you've always wanted. Neat, intuitive and fun.

R22

KRAZY IVAN 77

Psygnosis, £39.99

Potentially playable first-person viewed robot-based shoot 'em up let down by limited views and a fiddly control system.

R15 PD15

MAGIC CARPET 96

Electronic Arts, £44.99

Very good mana-based shoot 'em up that's very hard and gets a bit repetitive after a while, but looks and plays fantastic.

R21 PD22 T26, 39



MAGIC CARPET 2 92

Electronic Arts, £44.99

Improved version of the first game with new monsters and scary night-time bits. Also comes with a good on-line help mode, and it's a little easier than the original.

R32 PD31 T42

MAGIC CARPET: HIDDEN WORLDS 80

Bullfrog, £19.99

Add-on levels for Magic Carpet, but beware: it's utterly, stupidly, nut-crushingly hard.

R22

Some titles may not be released at the time of going to press. Most titles are despatched same day, but can take up to 28 days. VAT is INCLUDE

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[illegible]

R MECHWARRIOR 2 88

Activision, £49.99
Rarely has stomping around the countryside in a 70-foot armour-plated monster robot, blowing the shit out of anything you take a dislike to and generally running amok been so rewarding, so spiritual, so... healing.

R32 PD32 T34, 36, 41

R MECHWARRIOR 2: MERCENARIES 88

Activision, £44.99
MechWarrior gets a graphical tweak with a bit of texture-mapping and proper terrain on some, but not all, levels. And it gets a gameplay tweak by having everything you do (or don't do) be motivated by financial gain rather than all that tedious clan nonsense. Other than that, it's business as usual.

R15 PD17

C METALTECH: EARTHSIEGE 2 90

Sierra, £44.99
Equally hard campaign mode, but here the graphics are excellent, the terrain varied and the sound effects stepped up. Which makes it just about the best giant robot game around. Windows 95 only.

R38 PD39

C MORTAL KOMBAT 3 90

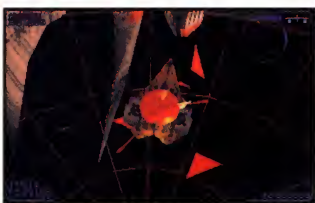
GT Interactive, £44.99
Latest version of the much-hyped 'gore-fest', complete with ludicrous cartoon-style blood spatters, fatality, babe-ality and 'friendship' finishing moves (tricky multiple button presses, though!). Excellent 2D beat 'em up.

R33 PD33

R THE MUPPET CD-ROM 87

Starwave/Ocean, £39.99
Hilarious outing featuring all your favourite sock-based characters in seven average(ish) arcade/puzzle games which sparkles with Muppet humour. Superb intro sequence.

R11 PD10



C MINILIST 91

Philips, £39.99
Good-looking shoot 'em up that's basically a first-person viewed Asteroids. Loads of variety, with mayhem, retro wire-frame and bizarre pool table levels, and even a bonus sub-game of Asteroids itself. Add to this a wide range of network options, a PWEI/Dog Eat Dog soundtrack and an in-game option to play your own CDs, and you have a minor corker.

R13

R PRIMAL RAGE 82

Time Warner Interactive, £39.99
Dinosaur-based beat 'em up in the sideways-on viewed StreetFighter mould (except you get to use your teeth a bit more). Good graphics, good gameplay: Jurassic Park for psychopaths.

R32 PD31

R PRINCE OF PERSIA 2 89

Broderbund, £12.99
Dated but nice-looking platform game.

R5 T6

PRIVATEER 75

Origin, £11.99
Wing Commander-style dogfighting, Elite-style trading.

R9 T10

C PRIVATEER 2: THE DARKENING 94

Electronic Arts, £39.99
The Privateer follow-up gets some decent, fast and furious interstellar combat à la X-Wing, plus greatly improved graphics, top stars, five million bucks' worth of studio-based acting and an engrossing well-told plot – the best space combat game ever.

R44

C PRO PINBALL: THE WEB 90

Empire Interactive, £34.99
Extremely realistic and gorgeous-looking game with a stonking soundtrack. There's only one table, but it's feature-packed – you can even nudge it from each side and the bottom. The best pinball experience you can get, short of buying a real Williams table.

R34 PD34

C QUAKE 96

ID Software/GT Interactive, £39.99
Quake?... Nope, it's gone. I can't remember what this somewhat obscure little number's all about. But apparently it's quite good.

R43 T43 LE48

RAVAGE 72

Warner Interactive, £39.99
Run of the mill game-on-rails shoot 'em up: looks lovely but plays ugly, and is too short.

R16

RAYMAN 76

Ubisoft, £39.99
Playable though quickly irritating, unoriginal PSX-converted platform game.

R36

C REBEL ASSAULT 2 90

LucasArts/VIE, £49.99
Gorgeous graphics, good solid gameplay and 'real' live action footage combine to make another thoroughly enjoyable, pre-rendered shoot 'em up experience for Star Wars fans. It even has a corker of a storyline.

R34 PD17, 29, 37

RESURRECTION: RISE 2 73

Acclaim/Mirage, £44.99
Nicks some ideas from other beat 'em ups and looks nice, but still falls short.

R37

R RISE OF THE TRIAD 82

US Gold, £9.99
One of the better Doom-alikes, but nowadays that's a bit like being one of the better Pong machine-alikes.

R26 PD26 T26

R ROAD RASH 95 84

Electronic Arts, £34.99
The motorbike-based beat 'em up finally makes it to the PC in Windows 95 form and turns out to be surprisingly good. It's hardly original in concept, but it's well put together and a good laugh. And it's got a link-up mode to bludgeon your friends.

R44

R ROBOTRON X 80

GT Interactive, £39.95
It's Robotron X, Jim – but not as we know it. Better graphics, swirly camerawork, but exactly the same gameplay. Run about, shooting wildly at thousands and thousands of robots in an enclosed, claustrophobic arena. Then do it again. And again. And again. A good modernisation of a classic game – but dashed repetitive.

R45 PD46

R SCORCHED PLANET 82

Virgin, £44.99
First-person viewed shoot 'em up that has you piloting a morphable hover jet-cum-tank thing through eight levels, subdivided into three stages each. Intuitive controls, lightning-fast gameplay (in lo-res) and nasty enemies combine to make it one of the more action-packed and enjoyable blasters around.

R44

SHATTERED STEEL 71

Interplay, £39.99
Yet another HERC-based stomper that proves to be just a little dull in the long term.

R46 PD43

R SLIPSTREAM 5000 88

Gremlin Interactive, £9.99 (Budget)
Hovory racing game that's rather like Wipeout except it runs at a good speed, is very playable with PC controllers, and costs less.

R27 T34

S.T.O.R.M. 70

Electronic Arts, £39.99
Scramble lookalike. Pretty but much too hard.

R38

STRIFE 70

Velocity/3DO, £39.99
Lets you talk to people. Uses the old Doom engi zzzzz.

R43

R SWIV 3D 85

SCI, £39.99
The Amiga, SNES and MegaDrive classic gets a 3D upgrade à la Magic Carpet, and a Desert Strike on amphetamines approach. It's very fast and very hard, even with power-ups that enhance your weapons to the point where you'd worry about the safety of the planet if you had any conscience at all.

R45 PD45

R TEMPEST 2000 85

Atari, £29.99
A 15-year-old Atari game gets a techno soundtrack and suddenly words like 'arcade classic' are being bandied around the office.

R37

R TERMINAL VELOCITY 80

US Gold, £12.99
The first of Apogee's 3D Realms games. Fly about in an anti-gravity sort of way, shooting everything in sight on the Magic Carpet-like levels; find the exit tunnel, warp to the next level; continue until bored.

R30 PD31 T29, 30

R TERMINATOR: FUTURE SHOCK 85

VIE, £39.99
Shoot 'em up based on the first Terminator film with full freedom of movement in a true 3D world. Look up and down (or die), drive cars, blow the shit out of terminators, robots and flying ships and get lost in the enormous war-torn levels.

R35 PD34 T40

C TERRA NOVA 90

Virgin, £39.99
Stomping about in robot-suits, shooting-the-crap-out-of-stuff game from the people behind System Shock. In fact, it's probably no surprise then that the game plays like System Shock Outdoors. Complex controls and less than stunning sound effects and graphics, but it's very enjoyable nonetheless.

R49 PD48

R TIME COMMANDO 86

Electronic Arts, £44.99
Classy-looking computer-rendered beat/hack/stab/shoot 'em up with nice backgrounds and lots of walking-about bits in which you're whisked to different eras in time to find something that may or may not be some weird computer virus thing. We may never know. But you're dying to find out, aren't you?

R42 PD44



C TIE FIGHTER 94

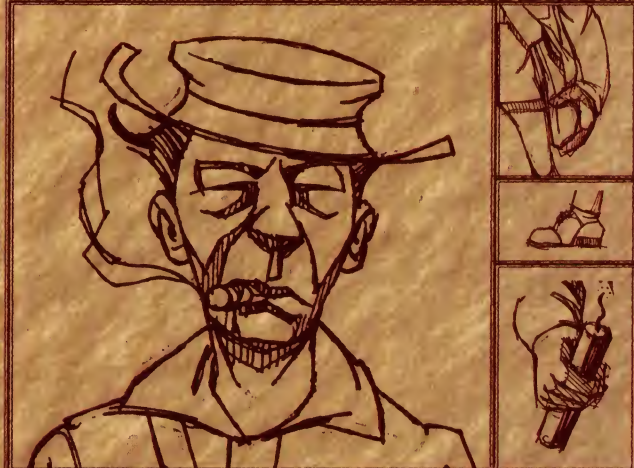
Virgin Interactive, £49.99
Star Wars fans will already know all about this one as it's the follow-up to X-Wing. It's stuffed with loads of new features and, much more importantly, the chance to succumb to the Dark Side, dress up in some really cool plastic uniforms and shoot the nuts off that bloody arsehole Luke Skywalker. If that's not overstating things a tad.

R18 PD29 T19, 20, 21

WANTED

OUTLAWS

"DYNAMITE" DICK CLIFTON



GUN FIGHTER AND SAFE CRACKER AT THE CRIPPLE CREEK BANK JOB

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ADVENTURE

TIE FIGHTER: DEFENDER OF THE EMPIRE 73
LucasArts, £19.99

Two new missions and a missile gunboat.

R24

R TILT 80
Virgin Interactive, £34.99

There are six tables to choose from and a variety of ways to view them, but it doesn't have the depth of gameplay provided by *Pro Pinball: The Web*.

R34 PD34

C TOMB RAIDER 95
Core Design, £44.95

A Prince of Persia-style platformer with a superb 3D engine that has something for everyone: platform action, tricky puzzles, scary things attacking you and a good storyline. There are also shifloads of animals to shoot for Royal readers, prodigious feats of leaping about for gymnastics fans, and underwater sections for Patrick Duffy fans. And the main character's a chick with large triangular gazongas.

R45 RD45 PD46 T47 48

TUNNEL 81 73

Ocean, £39.99

Light-sourced, texture-mapped drive-along shoot 'em up: great presentation, toilet-paper thin gameplay. Spot the psx conversion.

R48

C ULTIMATE DOOM 90
GT Interactive, £29.99

Doom with an extra episode. PC Zone helpful hint - buy Issue 30 and get it for free.

R29 Free upgrade pack 30 T50

VIRTUA COP 78

Sega, £39.99

Addictive, mouse-driven conversion of the arcade hit that just doesn't have enough to make it long term.

R46 PD46

VIRTUA FIGHTER PC 79

Sega PC, £29.99

Same game, but doesn't need the accelerator card and markedly slower as a result.

R42 PD41

C WILLIAMS ARCADE CLASSICS 90
GT Interactive, £29.99

If you really want to use your million-dollar multimedia Pentium to play conversions of prehistoric arcade games that have all the graphical sophistication of a drawing by Stevie Wonder, then this is probably the compilation for you. Arcade-perfect versions of *Defender*, *Robotron 2084*, *StarGate Defender 2*, *Joust*, *Bubbles* and *Simstar*. Classic '80s arcade action.

R34 PD Any shareware distributor

R WING COMMANDER IV 85
Origin/Electronic Arts, £44.95

The filmed sequences with real sets and proper actors cost over \$8m to make, and it shows. A genuinely absorbing plot with a strong storyline provides the most complete cinematic gaming experience to date. Sadly, the gameplay bit is less impressive and nor has it advanced since the last version. You'll also need a seriously meaty PC to run it.

R35

R WITCHAVEN 88
US Gold, £29.99

Doom-style hack 'em up. You won't find any firing spells from a safe distance here - it's hand-to-hand combat all the way. This sits midway between *Heretic* and *Ultima Underworld* (but better than *Heretic*). Fast, ferocious, and very bloody.

R33 PD33 T35, 36

WITCHAVEN 2 72

US Gold, £29.99

More like an add-on disk than a sequel.

R40

C X-WING 90
LucasArts, £44.95

Excellent *Star Wars*-based space combat game that spawned a myriad offshoots.

R2 PD17, 29 T41

ACE VENTURA 72
7th Level, £TBA

Slick point-and-click adventure, maybe for kids.

R46

C ALONE IN THE DARK 3 95
Infogrames, £34.99 (compilation)

Available as a budget compilation containing all three *ATD* games - and given the difficulty level, this gives you approximately five years of gameplay for your money. Bargola!

R21, 23 PD24 T27

C AZRAEL'S TEAR 90
Mindscape, £44.99

Atmospheric blend of two first-person viewed classics, *Ultima Underworld* and *System Shock*, with yet another Knights Templar theme. Engaging, tricky, but very rewarding.

R39 PD38 T45, 46

R BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD 87
Viacom New Media, £39.99

Point-and-click adventure with all the regular characters from the series. Snappy and amusing dialogue, unusual sub-games and plenty of puzzle-solving for adventure game traditionalists.

R35 PD35

C BIOFORCE 95
Electronic Arts, £44.99

Stunning-looking, action-packed adventure game with built-in unarmed (and armed) combat. Extremely difficult, its tension derives from the race against time scenario.

R25 PD26 T28

R BURN:CYCLE 85
Philips, £44.99

One of the better interactive movie-type adventures. Good pacing, a sharp plot and plenty of variety in the gameplay.

R32



R BROKEN SWORD 84
Virgin Interactive, £44.99

'Interactive cartoon' from the Beneath A Steel Sky team. Gameplay tends toward lengthy conversations thanks to an icon-based speech interface which doesn't allow you to phrase questions yourself. Gorgeous scenery, and well worth a look - more than a match for many of the *RMV* interactive movies around.

R42 T48

CHRONICLES OF THE SWORD 68

Psychosis, £39.99

Boring puzzler set in the time of King Arthur.

R39

R THE CITY OF LOST CHILDREN 84
Psychosis, £34.99

A beautiful looking, extremely atmospheric adventure based upon the film of the same name and played in an *Alone In The Dark* style. The *ATD* approach extends to many of the puzzles, so you'll need patience and hawk-eyed observation, but at least there are alternative solutions to many problems.

R48

DAGGERFALL 65
Virgin Interactive/Bethesda, £44.95

Ambitious yet flawed try at an open-ended *D&D* jobbie, that ends up just being a jobbie.

R43 T47

R DAY OF THE TENTACLE 87
LucasArts, £39.99

Very taxing with very American humour - not quite up to the standard of the classic LucasArts offerings.

R7 PD17 T7

R DIABLO 88
Zabrac/Blizzard, £44.99

An *svga*, isometric, scrolling, combat-based, quest-driven, real-time RPG. A well-designed interface, gorgeous graphics and good sound-track - but basically all you do is wander around repetitively twatting things with various weapons and/or magic. Presents nothing that new on the gameplay front, but what it does it does very well, and there are a host of top-notch multi-player options.

R48

R THE DIG 87
LucasArts/VIE, £44.99

A return to the good old days of classic point-and-clickers for LucasArts, although it doesn't actually reach the heights of *Indiana Jones*, *Monkey Island* or *Sam And Max*. A good, involving story, a fair amount of atmosphere, and it's not too difficult to get through.

R34 PD32 T37

C DISCWORLD 96
Psychosis, £49.99

A staggeringly high score for this very difficult adventure game based around the books of Terry Pratchett. It's funny, if you like the boy Pratchett's humour, extremely entertaining - and very, very hard.

R22 PD23 T30, 44

C DISCWORLD II 93
Psychosis, £44.99

One of the best adventure games, based loosely around Pratchett's books *Mort* and *Reaper Man*. Unlike the first game, you won't find yourself wandering around endlessly, lost and stuck, because the difficulty level is much more manageable. It's still challenging, as well as enjoyable and funny, with the gameplay heavily influenced by classics like *Monkey Island*.

R44 PD44

C ECSTATIC 93
Psychosis, £44.99

ATD-style gameplay with ellipsoid-generated characters, no inventory and a far higher pert buttocks-count. Difficult, with some tricky puzzles, and the constant running away can be wearing until you get some serious pointy weaponry.

R21 T41

C ECSTATIC II 91
Psychosis, £39.99

Pitches you headlong into a stressful world packed with psychotic goblins, ravaging werewolves and sword-waving lunatics. Gasp with delight at the graphics, grunt as you dish out the violence and beg for mercy as you meet an untimely end yet again. Bigger, more beautiful and much, much harder than the original, it will have you playing (and weeping) for weeks.

R48 PD47

C FULL THROTTLE 92
LucasArts/Virgin, £44.99

Sadly, it has a god-awful sub-Road Rash arcade beat 'em up on bikes bit in the middle which spoils the flow. Apart from that, it's a cool point-and-clicker.

R27 PD26 T29

C GABRIEL KNIGHT 90
Sierra On-Line, £44.99

Tim Curry does the voice for the hero in a louche camp style in this tense, some would say brooding, atmospheric thriller.

R14 T32

R GABRIEL KNIGHT 2: THE BEAST WITHIN 88
Sierra, £44.99

Well-acted *RMV*-based interactive movie with a complex plot that actually has a fair bit of gameplay, although it's not the hardest game you'll ever come across.

R36 T39, 40

R THE GENE MACHINE 87
Vic Tokai, £44.99

Pleasant point-and-clicker in the style of the LucasArts classics, except it's British. Nice backdrops, an interesting HG Wells/Jules Verne storyline set in the 19th Century, and

humour that will make you smile. Puzzles may be just a little too easy for rock-hard adventurers, but still enjoyable.

R41

R HARVESTER 83
Virgin Interactive, £39.99

Despite lorry-loads of *FMV*, *Harvester* provides plenty of traditional, old-fashioned adventure gameplay. Those with sensitive stomachs may find it all a bit gore-tastic; the politically correct may object to voyeuristic shots of a chick hanging around in suspenders and undies; those who don't care either way will find proper puzzles, an involving plot, and interesting sub-plots.

R42



C INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS 93

LucasArts, £12.99

Budget, all-talkie version of one of the best adventures ever made. Three ways to play, depending on how hard you want to think, whether you like an occasional bout of fisticuffs, or whether you want a bit of help from your lippy, sidekick Sophia.

R37 (budget)

R INDIANA JONES AND HIS DESKTOP ADVENTURES 80

LucasArts, £39.99

Weird desktop adventure game-cum Windows 'toy' that you can load whenever you want to try your hand at some puzzles featuring the eponymous whip-wielder.

R41 PD40

R KINGDOM O'MAGIC 82
SCI, £44.99

Point-and-click adventure that can be amusing at times, but maybe without the stereotypical minorities and the huge-breasted chick.

R38 PD38 T41

C KING'S QUEST VI 93
Sierra, £44.99

Excellent adventure game with some mind-boggling puzzles, marred only by the fact that everyone, even the supposedly evil ogres, tries to be cuter than Hathaway out of *ER*'s top lip.

R24 T32

R KYRANDIA 3 87
Virgin, £29.99

Good quality adventure, now available as part of the Westwood Studios 10th Anniversary Pack, along with the first two games (*Legend Of Kyrandia*, *Hand Of Fate*) and *Dune II* and *Lands Of Lore*. Well worth 30 quid.

R23, 40 (compilation) T26

LEISURE SUIT LARRY 7: LOVE FOR SAIL 79

Sierra, £44.99

If you like looking at cartoon breasts and sitting through some of the worst jokes in the history of mankind, this is the game for you.

R46 PD43

R LIGHTHOUSE 80
Sierra, £39.95

Myst-style adventure that starts off normal and gets very weird very quickly, with baby-napping demons and suchlike. Very ponderous and puzzle-based, it's ponderous and tricky. So avoid it if you're stupid and impatient. That means you, Paul Gascoigne...

R45

C LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE 93
Electronic Arts, £44.99

Pretty-looking, gorgeously animated, isometrically-viewed adventure. Quite hard and the auto-save feature can be a pain in the arse, but worth investing some time in.

R21

LOST FILES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: CASE OF THE ROSE TATTOO 70

Electronic Arts, £39.99

Point-and-click adventuring featuring everyone's favourite drugged-up violinist. No, not Vanessa Mae.

R47

MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND 80

Activision, £34.99

Another top title featuring the only loveable creatures ever to be based on underwear. This time it's a point-and-click adventure inspired by their latest film, aimed squarely at children. However, the blend of video and sumptuous hand-drawn backgrounds, easy-to-follow adventures and humorous sub-games will charm adults just as much.

R44 PD16

THE NEVERHOOD 79

DreamWorks Interactive, £49.99

Simplistic point-and-click adventure with linear structure and plasticine characters.

R45

NORMALITY INC 90

Gremlin Interactive, £44.99

Ambitious point-and-clicker with first-person viewpoint that can drone on a bit at times but has its fans in the office. The hero's a bit of a dork, but at least it's trying something new.

R38 PD36



THE PANDORA DIRECTIVE 92

Virgin/Access, £44.95

The nice-looking follow-up to *Under A Killing Moon* features the same private dick hero, and is an engrossing, FMV-based adventure with decent puzzles and an absorbing plot. And as there are three different paths through the game, it's FMV as well as FMV. It also comes with a novel based on the game, which, if you read it first (and apparently it's quite good) will spoil it completely.

R43

PHANTASMAGORIA 50

Sierra, £49.99

Interactive movie that forgot the interactive bit.

R19

PHANTASMAGORIA: A PUZZLE OF FLESH 65

Sierra, £49.99

Marginally better than the first, but you're still led through it, fulfilling tedious tasks and watching events unfold, rather than playing a game. And it's so controversial.

R48

POLICE QUEST IV: OPEN SEASON 80

Sierra On-Line, £44.99

Another in the long line of procedurally-based cop games. Walk about, take notes, eat doughnuts, beat Rodney King to a bloody pulp. It's all in a day's work at LAPD HQ.

R19 T15

POLICE QUEST: SWAT 83

Sierra, £49.99

If you wanna make it as a SWAT Team member, ya gotta practice. And practice. And practice. Gun-toting cop fun, still procedurally heavy but only needs light-gun compatibility to make it perfect.

R36

PRISONER OF ICE 88

Infogrames, £44.95

The second in Infogrames' Cthulhu-based series of adventures; follow up to *Shadow Of The Comet*. Good plot, good atmosphere.

R29 PD31

QUEST FOR FAME 80

IBM, £49.95

Play your way from obscurity to megastardom in this music biz-based adventure which uses Aerosmith's music and has you playing your way using a plastic plectrum (you can strum on a tennis racket or even your partner's pubic hair, if you want). Strum well enough to succeed and you'll end up playing with Aerosmith themselves...

R35

REALMS OF THE HAUNTING 93

Gremlin Interactive, £44.99

Epic stuff. A mean, extremely scary action/adventure of trapped souls, black magic and vicious bastards. Nicely interwoven plots, great dialogue, good puzzles and lots of shooting combine to make it extremely playable, and very addictive - it will have you cacking your pants on a regular basis.

R47

ROBINSON'S REQUIEM 85

Prism, £19.99 (Addictive compilation)

Original but flawed survival game in which you utilise your wits, your huge range of prescription drugs and your hand-to-hand combat skills. The only game ever to give you the option to amputate your own limbs.

R16

SAM AND MAX HIT THE ROAD 93

US Gold, £12.99 (budget)

An all-time high point in point-and-click adventures. You control the eponymous heroes (a dog and rabbit Freelance Police team) in their pursuit of Trixie the Giraffe-Necked Girl who's been abducted from a freak show. All-talkie with a funny script and a good mix of puzzles. LucasArts at their very best: an essential purchase at this price.

R11, 16 PD17 T13, 14, 32, 48

SANTA FE MYSTERIES: THE ELK MOON MURDER 72

Activision, £44.95

Superior multimedia murder-mystery fun centring around a Native American community.

R44

SERPENT ISLE: ULTIMA VII PART 2 89

Origin, £34.99

Origin's flair for storytelling and atmosphere makes this a corker of an RPG.

R3 T5

SHADOW OF THE COMET 88

Virgin White Label, £12.99

Decent all-talkie adventure based on HP Lovecraft's *Cult Of The Cthulhu* books. A case of involving storyline winning out over less than top-notch presentation, but despite the odd fault Lovecraft fans will love it.

R18, 38 T5, 6, 7

SIMON THE SORCERER 2 84

AdventureSoft, £29.99

Simon returns with another batch of smart-arsed jokes. Chris Barrie-less (as if anyone cares), it's still a good all-talkie point-and-clicker. Available in a budget package with the prequel and a free (disgusting) T-shirt.

R50 T10, 32, 46

SPYCRAFT 91

Activision, £49.99

Win95-only 'spy simulator'. Unfortunately free of fast cars, birds in swimsuits and spectacular stunts, but loads of FMV and chocka with puzzles, spy satellites, decoding routines and original features. Engrossing.

R58

STAR TREK TNG: A FINAL UNITY 94

MicroProse, £49.99

There are shillloads of *Star Trek* adventure games, but this one is the best. If you like sticking a pasty on your forehead and prancing about with your trousers tucked in your Chelsea boots, this is the one for you.

R27 PD27 T31, 32

THREE SKULLS OF THE TOLTECS 70

Revivision/Warner, £39.95

Point-and-clicker with tedious conversations, crap jokes and very low difficulty level.

R45

TIME GATE 84

Infogrames, £44.99

From the team that brought you the *Alone In The Dark* series comes a game that looks remarkably like *ATD*. Knights Templar-based fun, with all the joys and faults - of *ATD*s 1-3.

R36 PD36 T38

TOONSTRUCK 93

Virgin Interactive, £44.99

A *Sam And Max*-style comedy adventure, which, despite revolving around the hackneyed idea of a comic artist being sucked into his own creations, turns out to be very good. There's a steadily increasing difficulty level that's pitched just right, a good interface, and large dollops of humour. And the real actor/cartoon background interaction is absolutely seamless.

R45

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 2: LABYRINTH OF WORLDS 94

Origin, £44.95

Superb first-person viewed adventure that's never been matched.

R1 T2, 3, 4, 20

ZORK NEMESIS 65

Activision, £44.99

Return to Zork follow-up decides to abandon gameplay entirely and opts for a *Myst*-like approach.

R39

DRIVING

BIG RED RACING 87

Domark, £9.99

Like a first-person perspective *Micro Machines*, hairing about in different wacky vehicles (snow ploughs, monster trucks etc) - you can even recreate *The Italian Job* in a Mini.

R37 PD40

DAYTONA USA 20

Sega, £39.95

It was disappointing on the Saturn. It's even worse on the PC.

R46

DESTRUCTION DERBY 90

Sony Interactive, £44.99

A cross between a racing game and smash 'em up where you chalk up more points for wrecking opponents' cars than for winning a race. Great graphics, initially exhilarating, but one-player gameplay isn't exactly the deepest. Plenty of network options, though.

R33 PD34 T38, 43



DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 86

Psygnosis, £45.99

This is better all-round: the wider tracks offer better racing, have jump ramps and alternative routes; there are improved graphics and more areas of the car to fly off into the crowd; more spectacular collisions and stunts; and, most importantly, a much better one-player option. But the network mode will apparently be on a data disk, and there are a fair few better driving games around this year - hence the lower score.

R46 PD47

F1 GRAND PRIX MANAGER 85

MicroProse, £44.99

Comprehensive sim that has you hanging from your Ron Dennis 'standing up' frame and managing a Formula 1 team through

WANTED

OUTLAWS

"SPIT'N" JACK SANCHEZ



THE ONLY PERSON TO WALK AWAY FROM A GUNFIGHT

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an on-going Championship, taking charge of organising tyre deals and team sponsorship to the hiring and firing of prima-donna drivers. Could be F1 anorak heaven.

R34 PD38

F1 MANAGER 89 Europress, £39.99

For the F1 anorak for whom *F1 Grand Prix Manager* isn't quite painstakingly detailed enough. The emphasis is even more heavily biased towards the resources side of things: balance sheets, regulations, sponsors, statistics and merchandising, as well as R&D, design, assembly and, oh yes, racing.

R44 PD48

FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 92 MicroProse, £14.99

The classic F1 racing game, now available in a number of compilations or on its own. Still great after all these years.

T4

FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 2 95 MicroProse, £30.00

Superb upgrade to the classic racing game with menus and set-up screens to tinker about with to your heart's content, and the game engine is unmatched. To get the textured graphics in all their glory you'll need a decent Pentium, but it still looks good and is playable in low-res.

R36

FATAL RACING 88 Gremlin Interactive, £39.99

Full-contact arcade driving game like a cross between *Ridge Racer* and the ancient Amiga classic, *Stunt Car Racer*. Excellent graphics and 16 tracks, some of which are spectacular. Unfortunately, it looks crap on anything less than a Pentium.

R52 RD53

GRAND PRIX MANAGER 2 80 MicroProse, £39.99

An improved interface (although the inter-related menu structure is still a long way from being seamless), and a few improvements like better feedback from your drivers, introduced no doubt by complaints from purchasers of the original, makes it the best of the three F1 management games. But more of a bug-fix than a sequel, and ought to be priced as such. Hence the lower score.

R47

HI-OCTANE 83 Bullfrog, £19.99

Anti-gravity racing game based on the *Magic Carpet* engine with lots of shooting of opponents, but a disconcertingly short view ahead of your car/truck/hovery thing (just as in *Magic Carpet*, in fact).

R29 PD29

INDYCAR RACING 93 Virgin Interactive, £9.99 (Budget)

Definitive simulation of the art of racing about in circles with almost all the same ingredients as the sequel; now available on budget in a number of compilations or on its own for a tenner.

R10 RD10

INDYCAR RACING EXPANSION PACK 94 Virgin Interactive, £17.99

Five excellent extra tracks (and one more roundabout). Of course, it would have been nice if they'd been in the original game.

R19

INDYCAR 2 90 Papyrus/Virgin, £34.99

Follow-up to the first oval circuit racing game which really doesn't add much. It does have glorious SVGA graphics, but if you already have *IndyCar 1*, get *F1GP2* instead.

R34 PD34, 43

MEGARACE 2 79 Mindscape, £44.95

An improvement on the original (which isn't hard) but there are loads of better driving games around - and they aren't 'on rails'.

R53 T47

MICRO MACHINES 2 93 Codemasters, £12.99

Brilliant sequel with different tracks and the same instant appeal. Also comes with a nifty little track designer.

R29 PD29

MONSTER TRUCK MADNESS 78 Microsoft, £44.99

Good, fun racing game in trucks with tyres the size of Pluto. Part *Stunt Car Racer*, part *NASCAR Racing*.

R44 PD45

NASCAR RACING 84 Virgin, £44.99

Roundabout racing in armour-plated saloon cars from the people who brought you *IndyCar*.

R23 PD22

NASCAR RACING 2 92 Sierra, £34.99

Excellent upgrade to an excellent game: car set-ups are all on one screen, and navigating through a race weekend is easier; there's SVGA everything, but the 3D engine has been improved so that it runs a lot more smoothly than its predecessor; the cars are more controllable, making it a lot more playable. And it's a lot more atmospheric, thanks to the steady stream of messages in your headset from your pit-side observer. There are also IPX network options, or modem and serial links for multi-player fun. But it's a heavyweight sim: for arcade fun, go elsewhere.

R46 PD45

THE NEED FOR SPEED 89 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Race extremely expensive cars down the longest stretches of highway in America without a turn-off, skid about to leave rubber on the road, crash spectacularly... then do it all again. Or look at the multimegabyte bits, showing how obscenely expensive your car really is. 3D-style crash and burn action comes to the PC.

R51 PD51 T40



NETWORK Q RAC RALLY 94 Europress, £39.99

Absolutely superb driving game that oozes atmosphere like a running sore in a heatwave. Every stage of the eponymous rally has been lovingly re-created, allowing you to drive like a maniac down single-track roads into blind corners with the best of them. Great stuff.

R44 PD44

SCREAMER 2 93 Virgin Interactive, £39.95

For its sequel, *Screamer* abandons trying to do a *Ridge Racer* in favour of doing a *Sega Rally*, and manages it very well. It's very fast, chocka with trackside detail and has more tracks and options than the first game, with four different championships to play through. More arcadey than *Network Q RAC Rally*, but without the longevity.

R45 PD46

SUPERKARTS 82 Virgin Interactive, £29.99 (budget compilation)

The PC's attempt at a *Super Mario Kart* clone, now available (with *IndyCar Racing* and *F1GP 1*) on the White Lines compilation. You get fast-moving, arcade action all the way, complete with a network option.

R24 PD19

TEAM F1 88 Electronic Arts, £39.99

F1 management game that's even more

comprehensive than *F1GP Manager*. Starting from scratch, you are responsible for everything from bank loans, R&D, sponsors, wind tunnel and engine testing through to office expansion, manufacturing contracts and industrial espionage. Overall it's a bit fiddly and confusing, especially as it's played against the clock. Ultimately worth the slog.

R42

PUZZLES

THE SEVENTH GUEST 60 Trilobyte, £44.99

Gorgeous-looking puzzle game with weak gameplay in the style of *Myst*.

R4

THE 11TH HOUR 67 Trilobyte/VIE, £49.99

Follow-up to *The 7th Guest* with more puzzles in fancy settings.

R35



BAKU BAKU ANIMAL 90 Sega PC, £29.99

Sega's PC boys finally come good in a big way with the coolest puzzle game around. *Tetris* or *Puyo Puyo*-style gameplay has you matching up cutesy animals and their food to clear the screen. Great fun in single-player, with a fab two-player single-screen option and a rather excellent kicking soundtrack.

R42 PD45

LEMMINGS 3D 71 Psygnosis, £39.99

Same game, different angle.

R51 PD29

MYST 67 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Puzzle game set amid pretty backdrops. Mac owners like it.

R15 RD16 T17

SIMULATION

A-10 CUBA 90 Activision, £39.99

Not the most stunning graphical exercise you'll ever see in a flight sim, it forsakes all that new-fangled texture-mapping stuff for good old-fashioned lumpy polygons. But it's one of the more enjoyable offerings to have surfaced in recent times, and has a good flight model and an excellent sense of altitude. There's a whole, working world in there for you to fly around in (and shoot the shit out of). We couldn't drag our reviewer away from it.

R47 PD47

AH-64D LONGBOW 90 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Great-looking chopper sim with good music and a great interface that tries to be a game. Be warned: even on a P133 it can go all jerky in hi-res, and it needs 97MB hard disk space. And there's no network play either. But it looks and plays fab.

R40

AIR POWER 84 Mindscape, £44.99

Another flight sim set in a parallel universe from Rowan, combining the wars-type aircraft with a fantasy strategy game in which you have to use planes, launched from airships, to take over the country.

R30 PD31



APACHE LONGBOW 96 Digital Integration, £39.99

The best helicopter flight model around - which means it's remarkably easy to roast your bony ass in a collision with Mother Earth. Nothing comes close to matching it for authenticity, tactical planning and spot-on handling, but if it's arcade thrills and spills you want, go for *Comanche vs Werewolf*.

R51 PD50

ARMORED FIST 86 US Gold/Novalogic, £12.99

The good-looking, sophisticated tank sim that sounds like a very scary sex aid. *Comanche* on wheels. Er, tracks.

R22

ATF 92 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Take a seriously spruced-up *US Navy Fighters* engine combined with a large number of 'conceptual' planes with different flight models; add an interactive reference guide courtesy of Jane's and a complex mission-building option and you get a seriously good flight sim for propeller-heads everywhere.

R38

COMANCHE 90 Novalogic, £29.99

Great-looking arcade chopper action. Now available on *World Of Combat* budget compilation, with *Armored Fist* and *Wolfpack*.

R16 T6, 44

COMANCHE VS WEREWOLF 88 Novalogic/US Gold, £39.99

Take the original *Comanche* chopper game, then chuck in all the add-on missions and a completely new extra game which lets you play two-player modem or serial linkup battles. Not the best flight model around, snooty propeller-head purists will sneer, but it's a good arcade blast with excellent graphics.

R33

DAWN PATROL 80 Empire Interactive, £44.99

Nice-looking WWI flight sim that lays claim to being an 'interactive book'. Meaning, you sit through loads of garbage between dogfights.

R21 PD21

EF2000 97 Ocean/DID, £49.99

The flight sim with something for everyone, from complex missions in an on-going war scenario to jump-right-in-and-start-blasting arcade thrills. Based on a plane that isn't even finished yet, the flight model's so good they're using it to train pilots.

R31 PD32

F-22 LIGHTNING II 90 Novalogic, £45.99

The first Novalogic flight sim not to use VoxelSpace technology is also the first to introduce a little intelligence into their usual arcadey approach. The terrain graphics are unmatched, other planes look great and the sound effects are loud and effective. There's a nice mission builder, but no multi-player options. Some think it's a bit easy, so it's the perfect 'My First Flight Sim'.

R45 PD47

FAST ATTACK 86 Sierra, £39.99

Ultra complex but extremely rewarding Windows 95-only submarine sim. Newcomers to the genre might find the gameplay a bit too much of a nightmare to deal with.

R39



C FLIGHT SIM 95 95
Microsoft, £48.99

The inevitable Windows 95 version of the ever-popular sim that actually teaches you to fly gets a big thumbs up. Good graphics, the chance to sit in the dark at home, fly around the world and land on the M4.

R44

C FLYING CORPS 92
Empire Interactive, £45.99

Gorgeous looking (and processor hungry) ww1 flight sim (our favourite type) that's a labour of love from start to finish. You get six planes to fly, each with excellent flight models. You get four lengthy campaigns, evenly divided between Allied and German sides, each offering different scenarios and varying levels of responsibility. And you get enough options to appeal to everyone from aerial shoot 'em up lovers to complete propeller heads, the finest clouds in Christendom, proper maps and even a replica ww1 flying manual. Cool.

R48



C HIND 90
Digital Integration, £44.99

It's from D1, so you already know that Hind is going to be a seriously heavy sim. The emphasis is placed on hyper-realism rather than presentation, so it will run on low-spec machines - but it's harder than juggling atoms. Includes loads of multi-play options though, so you can die among friends.

R40

C JETFIGHTER 3 91
EIDOS Interactive, £39.99

The latest in the Jetfighter series boasts a geographically accurate map of most of South America to have aerial fun within. There are loads of extremely hectic missions - maybe a bit too hectic - and a walk-aboutable aircraft carrier from which you plan your next mission. The padlock view is excellent, as is the enemy pilots' AI. It's all good, in fact - without really adding anything new.

R47

R KA-50 HOKUM 85
Virgin, £39.99

Excellent helicopter flight sim based around the ubiquitous, extremely effective Russian chopper. Very realistic and therefore very hard to fly properly.

R20

C NAVY STRIKE 90
Empire Interactive, £44.99

Two games in one: a flight sim, where you pilot a jet fighter in the slightly scary future, and a military command sim. Very atmospheric, it grows on you the more you play it.

R33 T38

R SEA WOLF 83
Electronic Arts, £44.99

Hugely atmospheric submarine sim - but it's let down by a control interface from hell.

R15

C SILENT HUNTER 90
SSI/Mindscape, £39.99

Superb ww2 sub sim that's really got the lot: cat-and-mouse stuff, creaking hulls, big explosions, depth charge attacks, blokes in chunky polo-neck sweaters... So atmospheric you'll find your ears popping with the pressure of being underwater. Probably.

R40

R SIM COPTER 85
Maxis, £39.99

A chopper sim that lets you fly around cities from Sim City 2000. The flight model's alright, without being too tricky, but what really makes it are the innovative and varied missions: airlifting people from the tops of towerblocks in gusting winds, following a fleeing villain's car, putting out fires, etc. All enjoyable stuff - and you don't need SC 2000.

R47

STRIKE COMMANDER 65
Electronic Arts, £11.99

Some brilliant bits: cinematic sequences, amazing graphics and sound, varied missions. And some unbrilliant bits: flying isn't as good as the plot stuff and it's sluggish.

R5, 9, 13 T5



C SU27 FLANKER 95
Electronic Arts, £19.99

Comprehensive flight sim based on the scariest aircraft ever built. Features the best flight model around, developed with input from top Russian pilots, but has less than dazzling graphics. Aimed at serious prop heads rather than those seeking lightweight thrills and spills (the instrument panels are even in Cyrillic script). No network or serial-link multi-play options, but a better simulation than EF2000, MiG29 or Tornado.

R34 PD33

R TFX 80
Ocean, £44.99

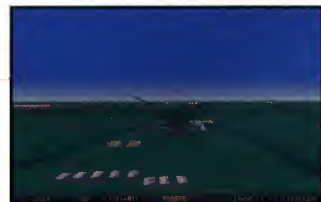
Near-future flight sim with graphics and sound that still stand up today.

R15 T12, 16, 34

C TOP GUN 92
Mindscape, £44.99

An outstanding flight sim with a cinematic storyline and loads of atmosphere, it's let down slightly by misleading views and a hires frame rate on a p133 like a supertanker performing a U-turn. Still good, though.

R57 PD38, 40



C TORNADO 93
Digital Integration, £44.99

Still a benchmark for an in-depth flight simulation, Tornado is so deep that you'll need a bathysphere. Low-level attack sim with excellent ground visuals. Definitely not for beginners.

R6

C US NAVY FIGHTERS 90
Electronic Arts, £44.99

One of the best-looking, most accurate flight sims, lacking only a multi-player facility.

R22 PD23

C US MARINE FIGHTERS 92
Electronic Arts, £19.99

Add-on disk for US Navy Fighters, featuring US and Yank Harriers, Yaks, the Russian supersonic Harrier rival and a gunship version of a Hercules transport plane. Great stuff, but still no network mode.

R30

WINGS OF GLORY 78
Electronic Arts, £44.99

Very playable and good-looking ww1 flight sim with tendency towards jerkvision.

R24 PD25

SPORT

C ACTUA SOCCER 92
Gremlin Interactive, £34.99

Arcade action featuring all the major national teams (and Wales). Excellent graphics, thanks to a 3D polygonised pitch arrangement and more camera angles than a BBC costume drama. And despite one or two large faults in the gameplay, it's still the best of a poor bunch of PC footy games.

R34 RD34 PD35 T43

C CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2 92
Domark, £44.99

The finest football management game ever made (and we mean it maa-ann). Every team in England, thousands of players from all over the world, minutely adjustable playing styles and formations. The only management game where you feel that what you're doing has an effect.

R31 T38, 46

C CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2 DATA DISKS 92
Domark, £9.99

The French, German and Italian leagues of last season, all on one disk.

R45

EURO 96 70
Gremlin, £29.99

Or Actua Soccer Again. Not enough to warrant another full-price game.

R41

R FIFA SOCCER 97 86
Electronic Arts, £39.99

The best FIFA to date features a nifty build-your-own-dream-team option, more leagues and teams, a database facility to play multiple leagues, and improvements in the gameplay, such as the ability to pass into space. And the players don't take over too much any more (at least not at the hardest level). There's even a new indoor game. It's harder, though, so if you struggled with previous versions, you won't exactly shine in this. And the perfect PC football game's still a long way off...

R46 PD46

R FRONT PAGE SPORTS BASEBALL 85
Dynamix/Sierra, £44.99

Nicks all the best features from all the other baseball games around and combines them, to make the best of its kind around. It comes out every year with different features.

R22

R FRONT PAGE SPORTS FOOTBALL PRO 85
Dynamix/Sierra, £44.99

The best American football game on the PC: a superb play-designer, great graphics, multiple camera angles and good arcade action.

R8

R HYPERBLADE 80
Activision, £TBA

In sports games 'futuristic' usually means 'shite', with few exceptions. This is one of them: a fast, playable, violent sort of ice-hockey-with-sabres. It would've scored more but there's no two-player-on-one-machine option, and needs a minimum P90/16MB.

R46 PD45

WANTED

OUTLAWS

"MORGAN"



FIND HIM!

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IAN BOTHAM INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 70

Beam, £34.99
Good, playable conversion of SNES hit, with unnecessary and crap FMV footage.

R37

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE 78

Electronic Arts, £39.99
Final outing for EA's old, isometric FIFA engine. Playable enough, if you practise.

R46

LINKS LS 94

Electronic Arts, £44.95
The long-awaited re-vamp to the world's greatest golf sim gives you more gameplay options, even more gorgeous graphics and a re-designed menu and view-selection system, making it better than ever. Includes a built-in upgrader for all the old data-disk courses you spent your wedge on in the past.

R43

MADDEN NFL 97 87

Electronic Arts, £39.95
This, the first incarnation of Madden on the PC for about six years, finally provides the sort of quality now taken for granted on the consoles, and so becomes the best American football game on the PC.

R44 PD45

NBA LIVE 97 92

Electronic Arts, £39.99
EA's basketball game comes good again, after last year's lacklustre effort. Beautifully put together, with excellent graphics and sound effects and music you can shuffle your feet to, it's action all the way. One of the best sports games on the PC at present. You can even create yourself as a player.

R47



NHL HOCKEY 97 90

Electronic Arts, £44.95
This release gets a handful of national sides thrown in (but it's rather patronising on the Scandinavian front) and the usual graphical tweaks. This time it's big close-ups of the refs picking up the pucks and whizzing about - hardly essential. But if you don't have an ice hockey game, this is the one to get - but if you do, don't bother. Unless you absolutely must have the most recently completed season's statistics and teams.

R45

OVERLORD 85

Virgin Interactive, £39.99
ww2 flight sim based around Operation Overlord (also known as the D-Day landings). Features mainly ground attack missions with the odd dogfight or bomber intercept, has two padlock views (count 'em) and some decent flight models.

R47

PGA TOUR GOLF 486 91

Electronic Arts, £19.99
(Budget compilation)
Not only excellent-looking but great-playing, fine-smelling golf game, available in the Essential Collections: Sport compilation along with FIFA Soccer and Formula 1 Grand Prix.

R20

PGA TOUR '96 94

Electronic Arts, £44.99
Two different courses, and new Links-inspired windows provide extra views. The main view graphics look slightly less sharp than last year's model but give more sense of depth. If you're not bothered about having the latest version, last year's is cheaper, has more courses and loses nothing in gameplay.

R32 PD37 T43



PGA EUROPEAN TOUR 94

Electronic Arts, £44.99
Finally, a game featuring the people who actually won the Ryder Cup competition rather than the also-rans. A different development team has tweaked the ball physics so it responds better to the contours of the ground, which makes it the best arcade golf game. And it's Yank-free.

R38

SWOS 96/97 80

Time Warner, £29.99
Also available as a £9.99 upgrade if you've got the original SWOS, this is basically a tweak disk. The squads are up-to-the-minute. You wouldn't notice many of the new features if you weren't told what they were (like your players performing headers standing still) and one or two additional 'management' features. Hardly state of the art, but it takes you back to when playability was the prime concern in football games.

R46

TNN BASS TOURNAMENT 80

Electronic Arts, £39.99
Fishing tournament game that's more to do with amassing money than the joy of hooking big floppy gilled things. Trophy Bass is better.

R39

TROPHY BASS 85

Sierra, £39.99
Near-perfect sim of the noble art, concerned more with the purity of thought and deed than the baser elements of money-grabbing tournaments. Comes with a voucher for a free bag of chips and a sachet of vinegar.

R39

ULTIMATE SOCCER MANAGER 2 80

Sierra, £39.95
Ultimate Soccer Manager 2 takes Premier Manager and quadruples it, dumping so much stuff on you to control that it almost creeps out of the realms of being a football management game entirely. Ground and property development, burger, beer and restaurant prices and sponsorship are just some of things you'll find yourself fretting over, as well as the football stuff like tactics, formations and set-piece moves. The ratings aren't that real, and it's no Championship Manager, but Premier Manager fans will like it.

R45 PD45

VIRTUAL POOL 91

Interplay, £44.99
Superbly implemented pool simulation with intuitive controls and a multi-player network option. It really is as close to real pool as you can get, apart from the little piles of coins on the side of the table.

R28 PD27

STRATEGY

ACROSS THE RHINE 86

MicroProse, £44.99
Tank-based battle strategy game which takes a while to come to terms with thanks to a heavy duty manual and a less-than-intuitive multi-view interface. Great depth if you can get your head round it.

R30

AFTERLIFE 88

Virgin/LucasArts, £44.99
God game modelled on Sim City in which

you actually play God, 'zoning' areas of punishment and reward for souls who come under your charge. Liberal helpings of humour, along with good longevity in the gameplay.

R40 PD49

AV NETWORKS 80

Infogrames, £44.99
A business sim that throws you in at the deep end of corporation management. Not nearly as easy to get into as the Maxis titles, unless you're a budding mover and shaker.

R30

ALIEN LEGACY 80

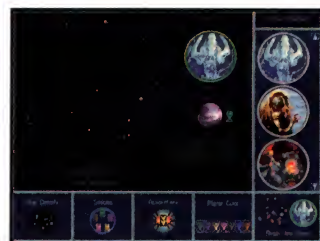
Sierra On-Line, £39.99
Another of the several million space strategy games vying for your dosh, but one of the better ones. A bit like a cheaper version of Outpost without the pretty bits. Daunting at first attempt, but it really does become much more addictive.

R20 T20

ALLIED GENERAL 83

SSI/Mindscape, £44.99
Win95-based follow-up to the successful Panzer General that should appeal to war-gamers and casual dilettantes alike. One or two faults, but its simplicity should appeal.

R37 PD38



ASCENDANCY 93

Virgin, £39.99
Take all the bits you loved from just about every strategy, god or warfare game, set it in the context of space exploration and planetary conquest, and you get Ascendancy. Get stuck into this and you can kiss goodbye to your social life, career and an acceptable level of personal hygiene.

R32

BATTLEGROUND ARDENNES 84

Empire Interactive, £40.00
Serious and deep, deep strategy game that's the first to be designed exclusively for Win95. Dragging war games screaming into the '90s? Whatever next? Good graphics?

R35 PD34

BATTLEGROUND GETTYSBERG 87

Empire Interactive, £39.99
Second in the Win95-based series. An excellent feel for the Gettysburg battles, complete with QuickTime movies and a Quick Start guide, but it needs 130MB of hard disk space for a full installation, or 60MB for a minimum. Which is quite a lot.

R37 PD39

BATTLEGROUND SHILOH 78

Empire Interactive, £44.99
Another flawed attempt to bring the two worlds of computer wargames and tabletop miniatures together.

R45

BATTLEGROUND WATERLOO 74

Empire Interactive, £39.99
The third in the Bataleground series, with more views and unit types, but dumber AI. And still no sign of a much needed scenario editor.

R42 PD46

BATTLE ISLE 3: SHADOW OF THE EMPEROR 93

Blue Byte, £45.99
Third in the series of highly respected and very popular strategic battle games. Worth checking out if you like your strategy with a futuristic bent.

R33 PD36

BEDLAM 89

Mirage, £34.99
Take a range of isometrically viewed city levels, and add a dinky little armoured hero, with more weapons of destruction at its disposal than the average aircraft carrier, and you have a highly addictive blasterama that's like Syndicate for the impatient, with weapon power-ups rather than an R&D team.

R43 PD42

BLOOD AND MAGIC 71

Interplay, £39.99
Command & Conquer wannabe with magic, that's slightly less exciting than watching newspaper yellow.

R46 PD46



CIVILIZATION II 90

MicroProse, £44.99
Enhanced sequel in full 3D which can make things cluttered at times, especially if you have a number of windows open. Combat's been tightened up, with new units and 'hit points', and even experienced Civ players will find there's a lot to learn. (Note: Windows 95 or 3.1 with WinG only.)

R46 PD40 T43, 46

CLOSE COMBAT 84

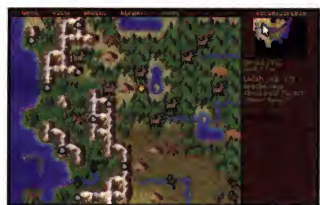
Microsoft, £44.99
Close Combat is like a sort of top-down viewed, realistic Command & Conquer. Based around the exploits of the US 29th Infantry Division in Normandy, it's a historically accurate, tactical combat simulation. May be the first in a new generation of real-time, super-realistic sims.

R45

CYBERJUGAS 80

Empire Interactive, £39.99
Political strategy game in which you play the President of the United States (no, not the band), complete with an interface that lets you access every country in the world. Set up trade agreements, negotiate peace settlements, track down traitors in your midst, or just shag an endless procession of beauty queens.

R41



COLONIZATION 90

MicroProse, £9.99 (Budget)
Civilization I with more depth and better graphics, released to make a quick buck until Civ 2 appeared. Allegedly.

R20 T4, 37

COMMAND & CONQUER 95

Virgin, £44.99
Take the strategy and resource management of Dune 2, add the fast-paced, real-time combat of Cannon Fodder, intelligent grunts, a myriad of weapons, and the exploration elements of Civilization and you have a hugely addictive game.

R28 L36 PD37 T38, 42

COMMAND & CONQUER: COVERT OPERATIONS 84

Virgin, £14.99
Seriously difficult add-on missions for anyone who thinks they're a bit of a C&C whizz.

R38 T41

C COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT 94 Westwood/Virgin, £34.99

C&C Squared: better graphics (svga in Win95), improved (but still not perfect) AI, more varied one-player missions and shitloads of new structures and units to develop. Most importantly, the easily set-up multi-player options (for modem and network action) give you multi-player options galore, with great new units and even fake buildings. Start a quick game, and you look up and your partner's left you and the goldfish are dead. Top stuff.

R47

CONQUEST OF THE NEW WORLD 75 Interplay, £44.99

Slow, cumbersome strategy game about... well, conquering the New World.

R39 PD36



C CREATURES 94 Warner Interactive, £29.99

We had to put this here because we don't really have an 'artificial life experiment' section. Maybe it's time we started. Anyway, this is the thing that's had boffins, programmers, social commentators and suchlike spurting into their underwear. Basically you raise, nurture and breed a race of artificial animals, teach them tricks and even a language, and breed from them to produce (hopefully) more advanced creatures. The more care you put into their development, the more interesting it gets and the more things they achieve, until in the end they're probably cleverer than you are. Much like parenthood, really. Astonishing stuff. And you can even trade them over the Internet.

R15

R CYBERSTORM 85 Sierra, £44.95

Interesting turn-based space exploration game with a Dune-ish plot, with you building robots to mine ore from different planets in competition with other companies.

R13

R DUNE 82 Virgin, £44.95

Adventure/strategy mix that has you, Paul Atreides, setting up a spice mining op on Arrakis and attacking the evil Harknness.

R7

R DUNE II 89 Virgin, £34.99

Excellent real-time strategy. Take one of the three tribes of Arrakis and struggle to beat the others until your mouse finger is a blood-soaked mess. The forerunner to the magnificent C&C. Available on Power, Corruption and Lies compilation.

R12



C FANTASY GENERAL 92 SSI/Mindscape, £44.99

The third in the series uses the same combat and movement engine as Panzer and Allied General, but it's the most exciting wargame (if that's not an oxymoron) so far.

R39 PD37

FRAGILE ALLEGIANCE 68 Gremlin Interactive, £44.99

Yet another asteroid-based mining, resource management space exploration thing. Strangely for a mining game, it lacks depth.

R46

C FRONTIER: ELITE II 95 Gametek, £39.99

Classic open-ended space trading game that lets you be anything you want.

R3

FRONTIER: FIRST ENCOUNTERS 78 Gametek, £39.99

Enhanced version of Elite II, bugged to jiggery.

R28

C GEARHEADS 90 Philips Media, £29.99

If we had a Weird category, this would be in it. It's a Windows 95-only sort of strategy/action game in which you set fighting wind-up toys against each other in an attempt to get them to the other side of the playing area. Surprisingly addictive.

R10 PD38



C GENE WARS 91 Electronic Arts/Bullfrog, £39.99

Has you competing against intelligent alien life-forms to produce an efficient food chain by selective breeding, under the watchful eye of some all-powerful superior beings who don't like dirty tricks. So you have to wait until they're not watching to set your mutants on the enemy. The winner gets to live. Very frenetic and very complicated.

R44



R HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC 87 The 3DO Company, £44.99

Another in the seemingly endless mob of expansion-orientated strategy games, this time with a fantasy/D&D angle, which means there's an ongoing plot, and lots of characters to recruit to your army on your travels. Strikes a nice balance between resource management and exploration, and multi-player options help its longevity.

R47 PD48

R THE HORDE 87 US Gold, £44.99

Slightly weird strategy game in which you try to develop and run a village, while waiting for the regular attacks by hideous, ravening monsters. A bit like being a pub landlord around here, really.

R16 PD16

JAGGED ALLIANCE II: DEADLY GAMES 79 SirTech/VIE, £34.99

Turn-based strategy/combat game that's nail-biting and funny at the same time. And it comes with a free second cd for link-up games. Laudable stuff.

R47



R KRUSH, KILL AND DESTROY 85 Electronic Arts, £29.99

Extremely derivative Command & Conquer wannabe that tilts things in the computer's favour so much (they produce troops out of nowhere, and can walk onto the playing area at any point - but you can't) that you can't afford a C&C-style build, build, build strategy. You have to go for fast attacks, and as such, it maybe has more in common with the likes of Cannon Fodder. Playable though, but hard, and not a patch on C&C: Red Alert.

R48

R LORDS OF THE REALM 2 80 Impressions/Sierra, £44.99

Resource management/strategy game set in the early mediaeval era, which retains the playability of the (now ancient) first version, while generally enhancing graphics, the interface and all that stuff people like to see in a game these days. And it's quite good.

R47

R MACHIAVELLI THE PRINCE 89 MicroProse, £44.99 (now on budget)

Colonization-style strategy game packed to the eyebrows with assassinations, plagues, pirates and intrigue. Get caught in bed with an underage boy! Sell guns to terrorists and get away with it! Well, the historical equivalent, anyway.

R28

C MASTER OF ORION 2 92 MicroProse, £44.95

The world's most complicated space conquest strategy game has been updated, and it's as sophisticated as ever. Don't even think about buying this if you have no patience, or expect to find a quick answer to taking over the universe - we're talking several hours of gameplay just to get your bearings. There are more things to research than any other game of its type, and the game changes in scope the further into it you get. Extremely rewarding and very addictive. Kiss real life goodbye.

R45

R M.A.X. 83 Interplay, £44.99

Combines old-fashioned turn-based strategy and resource management, in the usual global domination kinda way, with this year's essential element, real-time combat. And does it very well, too, with the potential to develop anything from ships and planes to tanks and spies, and all in lovely svga-rama. Has a pronounced strategic slant, though. (Pronounced 'strategic slant'.) (© Spike Milligan, 1955.)

R46 PD45

R PERFECT GENERAL 82 Mirage Software, £44.99

Just one of the many thousands of highly playable and engrossing hex-based wargames just waiting for the opportunity to take you in their big, comfortable arms and protect you for the rest of your days, you huge hunk of man, you.

R29

R RISK 82 Hasbro Interactive, £39.99

The computer version of the best-selling board game that can permanently divide lifelong friends overnight (believe us, would we lie to

WANTED

OUTLAWS

"HENRY" GEORGE BOWERS

SHOT A SHERIFF

ESCAPED HIS OWN HANGING

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escape

INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

Not suitable for children



*Baywatch
blah blah ostriches
blah blah 25 pints blah
blah vasectomy...*

*Oh Marie, you've
been surfing those gossip
websites instead of
ironing again!*

Inside Issue 3

Who's doing who

We reveal how you can find the gossip that the newspapers are too afraid to print

On-line purity tests

Ever received oral sex from someone with braces? Ever had sex with an animal? Ever used a feather during sex? Find out how pure you really are

Plus:

- How to pull in a cyber bar
- You can get anything pierced these days - we reveal all
- Discover how Destruction Derby II compares to real-life stock car racing
- Pub quizzes like you've never seen them before
- Hundreds of games, Net sites and multimedia titles reviewed and rated

Pix. Photodisc



Issue 3 on sale Thursday 13th February

you?). As well as a 'classic' version (ie straight board-game replica), it has an enhanced version, with loads of little features to make the whole thing more computer-friendly (you can take pawns to bargain with, there are five different game maps, different terrain, etc). And you can play over a network or modem. But unfortunately it doesn't have real-time combat, which is disappointing.

R46



C **SETTLERS 2 92**
Blue Byte, £39.99

A whole range of improvements in this sequel, including a new interface, more varied gameplay and far, far bigger levels. Frighteningly addictive.

R41 PD0 T47

C **SIM CITY 90**
Maxis, £9.99

The original game that spawned a monster, it now looks really ropey and everyone has a copy of it somewhere.

R20 T22

C **SIM CITY 2000 92**
Maxis, £39.99

Fully rotatable 3D version of the classic strategy game with far more depth (literally - you have to look after stuff underground now, too) and an excellent hierarchical menu system to control it all.

R13 T15

C **SPACE HULK 90**
Electronic Arts, £11.99

Classic real-time strategy action game with liberal doses of death and destruction, huge gouts of blood and gore, and masses of tension and fear. It's a bit like *The Generation Game*, really.

R41 16 PD16 T8, 7

C **SPACE HULK: VENGEANCE OF THE BLOOD ANGELS 90**
Electronic Arts, £49.99

Windows 95 version of the 3D version, featuring the best missions from the original game, a new campaign, new graphics and sounds and a full 3D engine. Looks bloody fabulous, but be warned that it's extremely hard.

R40

R **STARSL 82**
Empire Interactive, £29.99

Space-based strategy and conquest kinda thing, originally a popular Internet shareware game. It's turn-based and has hot-seat, network and play by e-mail options for up to 16 people. Has intricate tactical options and strategies, but little graphical appeal and no arcade mode at all. You can design your own ships, though, and even create new races - technically known as miscegeny in the law courts. And no, you can't watch.

R48

STAR CONTROL 3 75
Time Warner, £39.95

Four whole years in the making and sadly a huge disappointment, losing much of the stuff that made *Star Control 2* so appealing, and concentrating on resource management.

R46 PD47

C **SYNDICATE PLUS 92**
Electronic Arts, £11.99

The classic isometric strategy game for amoral, homicidal maniacs, plus the data disks, plus a network play option.

R17



C **SYNDICATE WARS 95**
Electronic Arts/Bullfrog, £44.95

The long-awaited update to the classic strategy game is undoubtedly one of the most violent, addictive and fun games on any system, a fiendishly subversive sci-fi extravaganza that's also incredibly atmospheric. The more you play it, the better it gets. And there are loads of multi-player options, too.

R43 PD4 T47, 48

R **TACOPS 81**
Strategic Plus Software, £49.99

Excitement a-bungo and endless tactical possibilities make this basic-looking real-time strategy game a genuine must-have. Includes network play and play-by-mail/e-mail options.

R40 PD40

C **THEME PARK 93**
Electronic Arts, £19.99

Design and run your very own theme park, competing against others for the title of the best in the world. Design lots of horribly nasty rides to make children sick (always good for a laugh, so long as you're not in the line of fire of the vomit). Force old ladies' hip-bones to pop out of their sockets with the G-force on your roundabout. And other stuff.

R17 T16, 19, 20, 33, 34

R **THIS MEANS WARI 89**
MicroProse, £44.99

A futuristic strategic wargame, using elements from both *Command & Conquer* and *Transport Tycoon*. Although it's slower-paced than *Command & Conquer*, it's engrossing once you've come to grips with the myriad options available.

R35 PD32

C **TRANSPORT TYCOON 94**
MicroProse, £9.99

Follow-up to *Railroad Tycoon* that has you moving into the world of aeroplanes and buses and stuff. Beautifully designed and thought-out. Excellent, hierarchical drop-down menus, and a playing area that feels about four times the size of *Sim City 2000*'s. One of the best strategy games around. Rush out and buy it.

R21 PD21

C **UFO: ENEMY UNKNOWN 93**
MicroProse, £34.99

Absolutely top-notch strategy/resource management game with turn-based fighting against nasty big squishy blobby aliens that are quite scary if you screw your eyes up and pretend Rolf Harris did the artwork. Amazingly addictive and compelling. *UFO: Enemy Unknown* spawned the all-conquering sequel, *X-COM*. The game is available on the *Power*, *Corruption* and *Lies* compilation, with *Dune 2* and two others.

R15, 16 T16, 18, 33

R **WAGES OF WAR 89**
3D0, £39.99

Isometric-viewed strategic combat game that puts you in command of a troop of hardcore mercenaries in a post-holocaust world. Turn-based combat and the amount of mission planning that is involved means it's more suited to the genuine strategy buff than the adrenaline-seeking C&C junkie, but the range of actions open to you, varied missions and hardware and good graphics combine to make this every thinking man's skirmish combat dream.

R46

R **WARCRAFT 2: TIDES OF DARKNESS 82**
Zabloc, £44.99

Long title aside, this is a very addictive and enjoyable sequel, with a good network option and some improved artificial intelligence and controls.

R46 PD37 T37, 41

WARHAMMER 73
Mindscape, £39.99

An addictive Windows 95 real-time strategy game that's just that little bit too hard, with annoyingly fiddly controls to boot.

R37

R **WAR WIND 88**
SSI/Mindscape, £44.99

Basically, you could say that it's 'Warcraft 2 with knobs on'. *War Wind* is more or less the same game, but there are weirder creatures and loads more specialist units and lots of little extras that give you ten times the variety in the gameplay. You don't create units from scratch, but you can buy them and train them up into something else. And there are four widely differing races, which require quite different tactics to succeed, adding greatly to the longevity. If you liked *Warcraft*, you will definitely like this game.

R45 T47

R **WORMS 84**
Ocean, £34.99

Best described as a cross between *Lemmings* and *Cannon Fodder* of limited one-player appeal - but it's brilliant in multi-player mode (up to four can play on a single machine, providing that you've got four friends, that is). Turn-based combat revolves around using a variety of destructive weaponry to blow the arses well and truly off your opponents. Went down well in the Zone office - a great laugh.

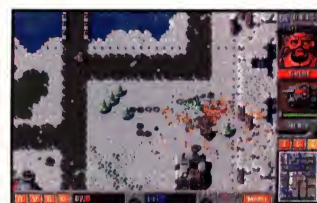
R33 PD32 T39



C **X-COM: TERROR FROM THE DEEP 94**
MicroProse, £12.99 (Budget)

The follow-up to *UFO: Enemy Unknown* is another turn-based strategy/combat classic, but this time set underwater, that'll have you up all hours, losing sleep, job and girlfriend while you fight the jelly-like alien terrors from the... uh... deep. Let's hope a future version will include a data disk with free couple therapy.

R26 PD25



C **Z 92**
Time Warner Interactive, £44.95

An addictive *Command & Conquer*-style game, based on occupation of zoned areas to control weapon-producing factories. As a result, it's more strategic than C&C, and lacks the exploration aspect. Network options, lots of entertaining cut-scenes and soldiers who feel free to criticise your efforts. And believe me, criticise you they will, because it really is very, very hard indeed. **Z**

R42 T46 PD43, 46

WANTED

OUTLAWS

TWO FEATHERS

A MAN WITH NO FEAR!

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This month we managed to get **Patrick McCarthy** to do this page. He thought it'd be fun. We've never seen him cry before.



(Above) We delegated Patrick McCarthy to answer your letters this month - only 'cos he desperately wanted the 'Man of the Month' title that goes with it. Not exactly dressed for it though, is he?

(Right) Will the Duke vs Quake saga ever end? Please don't write to us again Eric!

ANOTHER HEART-BROKEN CORRESPONDENT

I am very disappointed that you didn't even acknowledge that you received the letter that I sent you last December.

Even if you don't publish a letter, it would be nice if you sent a reply saying that it had reached you.

Yours sincerely,

Kieran Crowe, Suffolk

Actually we did reply to your letter, Kieran. As your tone suggests you're already aware, writing and putting together a magazine every month utilises but 5% of our time, and we spend most of the rest of our working day sitting about drinking tea, eating cake and watching Captain Pugwash videos. The enormous budget we work with allows us to employ 25 full-time secretaries, who respond to every one of the many hundreds of letters we receive each month in minute detail. The fact that you did not receive your hand-written reply is no fault of our top-notch team, but a sad indictment of today's Post Office. As you can imagine, we are disturbed that you did not receive it. Please accept our apologies, and a cheque for £1000 (sorry, only joking) to cover the cost of a therapist who will hopefully help you come to terms with the anguish you have suffered.

A HUMORIST WRITES

Do your feet get too hot when you're sitting at your computer all day? Simply type <FORMAT> at the c:> prompt, and the spinning of the hard drive will cool them down nicely.

Jeff Turner, Godalming

Très amusant, Jeff. I think you have us confused with a magazine beginning with 'V' and ending in 'iz'.

ERIC COVERDALE: MAN OF LETTERS

Right I don't care what anyone else says...blah blah blah... but in true honesty I think Quake is crap... blah blah blah, yuddah yuddah yuddah... in comapison which has the best

weapons Duke nukem 3D or Quake the answer:Duke nukem. Blah blah blah.

Eric Coverdale, CompuServe

I've left this letter in its original form as I thought it was more amusing that way.

Something tells me that in years to come no one will be publishing the

collected letters of Eric Coverdale.

A PROBLEM SHARED IS A PROBLEM STILL

I am concerned about my body. It has started growing hair in the most unlikely places and I don't know what to do. I am twelve years old and I have no one to ask about this as my parents refuse to talk about such matters. Please, please help.

Michelle Green, East Grinstead

You seem to have mixed up your letters and envelopes, Michelle. Presumably the Just Seventeen Problem Page received a lengthy Duke vs Quake diatribe. Anyway, we'll try to help: basically, hair sprouting on your body is a sign of sin. The more the hair sprouts, the more evil you are. If it completely obscures the skin beneath, you're going to burn forever in eternal damnation. You've obviously been lying to your parents about something, or having dirty thoughts about Ronan out of Boyzone. Wash your hands, stop sinning, and it will go away.

ANOTHER DISAPPOINTED CUSTOMER

I am extremely disappointed with the quality of some of your reviews. I feel they lack depth and objectivity.

Zone appears to be getting caught up in publishers' PR hype and giving some very flawed titles scores in the 90's. In fact too many games are getting scores in the 90's.

Jas Hayre, CompuServe

Oh sod it! You've got us sussed! Someone only has to tell us that a game's halfway playable and we give it 95 without even

playing it. We don't care a fig for our readers. We exist only to line our pockets with the huge kickbacks that are to be had in the games industry. We make more money than John Fashanu, Bruce Grobbelaar and Hans Segers put together, and we blow it all on Class A drugs. Nobody here has a full set of nostrils anymore. I'm not surprised you don't trust us. I don't trust us myself.

I think that if you compare our scores with other mags, we're pretty consistent. We try and give games every chance when they come in for review - in other words we wouldn't give a football game to someone who despises football because it's unlikely that a reader who hates football games would consider buying one anyway.

Consequently, sometimes games that we don't expect to be big score very well.

THE JAPANESE: DISCUSS

I noticed that you criticising Wizardry Gold in your Pick 'n'

Mix section. Well done. I've got the original version (Crusaders) and know just how out of date it is. I put your comments to SirTech on CompuServe, and according to them the music, TV show, films etc that Wizardry has inspired all come from Japan, where it is (I quote) "a major phenomenon". What's that say about their taste in games, eh?

Andrew Watson, CompuServe

Write to PC Zone

Send your letters to:

**WordProcessor
PC Zone
Dennis Publishing
19 Bolsover Street
London W1P 7HJ**

Send your e-mail to:

**CompuServe: PC ZONE 100142, 2152
CIX: PCZONE@CIX.compulink.co.uk**

Don't forget to check out the PC Zone CIX conference if you're on-line.

If your letter is selected as 'Letter of the Month' we'll send you a bundle of T-shirts and maybe even a game. COOI

NB: PC Zone retain the right to completely edit, re-write and change all correspondence in order to make them even more smug, funny and witty.



You have to remember that other major phenomena in Japan include dispensing machines that sell used girls' knickers and chewing gum pre-chewed by teenage girls, and eating a fish that can kill you if it isn't cooked just-so. They're clearly unhinged.

TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED

Can I just say that I don't fancy Lara Croft in the slightest – she's not a real woman, but a collection of coloured-in polygons. And the advert with Joanne Guest in it was about as interesting as watching grass grow. And anyone who got excited by either is a sad wanker.

Robert Lyons, Harrogate

Oh, go on then.

(Above) Hands up who likes *Wizardry Gold*? Hey, even these three guys can't make up their minds – and they're in it!



Letter of the month

ARE WE BEING SERVED?

I've returned more than 15 registration cards since 1993 (but only if the postage is free and they don't ask for my dog's inside leg measurements). Funny, even now I'm still getting calls from double glazing salesmen! I also get postcards advertising newly-released games, which have been reviewed in *PC Zone* prior to the postcards arriving. I also received a newsletter from Sierra, a discount offer on *Masters Of Magic* from MicroProse, (which was at a higher price than I could buy it mail order), and I used to get the odd magazine from Bullfrog (though I've not heard from them for quite a while now).

I still agree with Patrick though – these registration cards are just a bloody waste of time. The only thing they achieve is to run up game publishers' business reply postage cost, which is no doubt passed on to us via the game price anyhow. So post 'em back unfilled, and get your full money's worth out of the game. That'll soon stop them!

PS. Maybe they didn't respond to the cards because Patrick's dogsbody (arf) left his mark on them.

Peter Brown, CompuServe

My dog got two other replies in the end, but since they arrived after the mag had been published I think we can safely discount them. Author Bill Bryson suggests returning all business reply mail, especially from credit card companies, torn up inside the pre-paid envelopes, just to wind them up... Sounds like a good idea. The only mark the dog left was when he sat down on the cards after we'd filled them in. And a bagel-sized brown asterisk wouldn't put anyone off, would it?



PRIVATEER 2: THE DARKENING

I purchased *Privateer 2: The Darkening* in December but regret to say I've found it extremely prone to crashing. You may already be aware of some of the problems... basically, it runs fine using disc 1, but crashes on disc 2 and disc 3 when trying to access FMV sequences and landing on a planet, or when trying to access the News bulletins through the booth system. At least one other person I know has had the same problem. I've been in touch with EA several times, and they've made various suggestions (including sending me a boot disc identical to the one I was already using), but they've yet to acknowledge that there's actually a problem. Their latest reply suggests I copy yet another 15-20MB of files from the CD to my 540MB hard drive which means the game will occupy nearly 90MB! It should run okay as supplied.

I'd be most grateful if you could investigate what's gone wrong with *Privateer 2*. The part of the game which works is very good (as stated in your review), but there's no point in completing a complex mission if it then crashes when you try to land on a planet!

Vernon Moorhouse, Swindon

What's with all the bugs in *Privateer 2: The Darkening*? Here are just a few of the many that I've discovered:

1. The game crashes when you try to load certain CDs. CDs 1 and 2 seem to crash more than the others. It usually happens when you're just about to get to the next part of the plot, and sometimes when you access the news bulletin board.
2. I also experience crashes when there's a lot of stuff happening on screen at once. I phoned EA and they told me not to run the game and under Windows 95 and it should be alright. I get the same problems under DOS. I have 16MB of RAM by the way. Shouldn't that be enough?
3. Quite often I've been given the details of a mission, flown to where the mission

co-ordinates suggest, only to find the person I'm supposed to meet isn't there, although the mission details don't disappear from my data bank.

4. The military sometimes open fire on me for no reason. This is a complete pain as the ship I've got isn't fast enough for me to just run away from them. This means I've got to do the whole mission again.

What's going on?

Peter Welsman, Cardiff

What's going on? Tell me about it. I've had nightmares about the whole thing since I first discovered people were having problems. The version I reviewed was completely bug-free. I almost completed the game and had no problems of any description. I've been constantly in touch with the people who worked on the game and the EA press department in an effort to sort everything out. I apologise to anyone who bought the game on the strength of my review and had problems with it, but I couldn't have foreseen the unfortunate mix-up with the CD mastering that led to the bug fiasco. Here's Electronic Arts' official response to the problem.

Chris Anderson, Deputy Editor

DAVID WILSON, PR MANAGER AT EA REPLIES

We are aware of the problems with *The Darkening*. Unfortunately, we mastered an early version of the game by mistake. We caught this version very early and pulled it back, but some copies still made it into the shops.

This explains why some people are having problems and some people aren't. Regardless, if you buy the game in the shops now, you shouldn't have any problems. For people who already have the bugged version, they can get a patch that fixes the problems on the Internet on origin.ea.com. We tried to get the patch to Chris Anderson in time for this issue's CD but just missed the deadline. He assures me it will be on the next one. We apologise unreservedly for the problems you've all had and will make every effort to ensure this doesn't happen with future products.

David Wilson, Electronic Arts



NEW ISSUE

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

MAXIM

APRIL 1997

£2.50

SUPERSTUD!

Can the new designer drugs make you harder?

'YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS DOC, BUT...'
Bizarre sexual accidents

'HIPPIES? LOSERS!'
The dropouts who dropped back in

HELL'S BELLES
Women to avoid at all costs

HOW TO...
Lose a stone
Land a plane
Dance at a party
Flog a dead car

PLUS!
THE
GREATEST
SPORTS
PHOTOS
OF ALL TIME

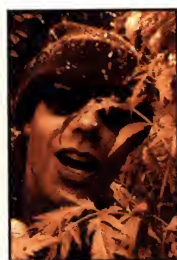
OH, EMMA!

We're ready for your close-up now, Miss Noble...

AND... Kate Winslet Jonah Lomu U2 Outdoor wear Juliet Binoche Hoovers Ostriches



On sale now



Culky's Life Tips

DEAR ENGLAND, alright? Colin here, from the edge of Feltham South, just round the corner from the pond that makes up Feltham Central. I get a lot of letters asking me what my favourite book is. Well, I don't have a favourite book, I've got four. But before I go getting all critical over them, basic reading skills are a must, so that's what I'm gonna learn ya - how to read.

Most people start reading a word from the left and then 'go' rightwards. When you get to the end of a line of words, move your head back to the original angle and 'go' rightwards again. (Don't be concerned if you find you have to turn a page at some point.)

This is 'reading'. You'll soon discover what your favourite words are - and your least favourite, too. My favourite words are Cheat, Gamble, Dark, Skive, Lie, Sneak and Fight. My least favourite words are Truth, Light, Health and Clever. I wouldn't even bother with ones like *dramatisation*.

The problem is: what's good to read? Well I've made three lists below... some of which are good... some okay... and some shitty. Enjoy!

Good

- Anything with a fight in it
- A story about women with no clothes on
- New or old war stories
- Girls being nice to men
- Stories about fast cars (even better if it's got pictures)
- Anything that's got an aeroplane in it
- Cowboy adventures
- Football hero lists
- Stories about strong men with big muscles
- Things about time and planets
- Space stories with funny aliens in them
- Rockets and laser guns
- Battleship adventures with submarines in 'em
- Car workshop manuals
- Some car registration numbers
- Video film boxes
- *Radio and TV Times*
- The alcohol content on beer cans
- How much a car costs
- *PC Zone*

Shitty

- Tap washer fitting instructions
- Words on the sides of builders' vans
- Speed restriction signals
- Any word with more than three sounds in it (eg *dramatisation*)
- Love stories
- Towel washing labels
- Any book that says you must do... or you will...
- Summons, affidavits or sepinas (*What? - Ed*)
- Bailiff's demands (as they never come with pictures)
- Dictionaries or Thesopichuses
- Gardening books with stories about pretty plants
- Health food ingredients

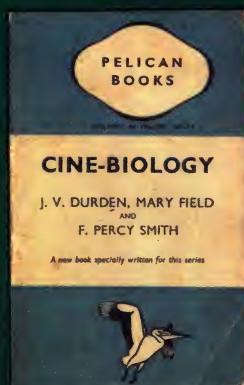
Okay

- Chocolate boxes (because you can see what you're cramming in your mouth)
- MacDonalds' hamburger lists
- Musical instrument catalogues
- Stories about women with a little bit of clothing on

These are my favourite books and I've had them a long time, so don't bother asking for a lend, okay?

CINE-BIOLOGY

by J V Durden, Mary Field and F Percy Smith



of nature in them and that.

Cine-Biology is what you get when you film nature working.

Ants hatching and that. It's got a particularly good chapter on Artemia (The Brine Shrimp) with pictures of male and female heads - and it's got a picture of a real spider too.

The reason I like this book is that it's mostly pictures. My one criticism is that they haven't put in any fast cars in with the animals. I think that would've looked good, having a fast racing car behind a Peripatus worm. That would've been clever. But it's still a good book because it's got a photo of a funny feeler in it.

This book is small and pocket-sized, so you can carry it anywhere - even my mum likes to take this one around with her, especially to bingo. I've read it ten times now and I still like looking at the pictures. It's got thousands of them, all with really weird bits

Greater London Council, Isleworth, Middlesex.

Sludge manure is made from the waste from our kitchen sinks - it's the stuff that our boys at the sewage farms can't break down no matter how hard they all try, so they sell it back to us in 40-kilo bags. Clever, eh?

Also in this book you can look at some funny cartoons someone has drawn to make it less boring... it works too, they are quite funny. They've also got loads of addresses where you can find locksmiths, night chemists and windbells, but not in alphabetical order, which means you have to read the whole book from the start every time. Silly... but the cartoons made my mum laugh a bit.

FLAGS

by I O Evans



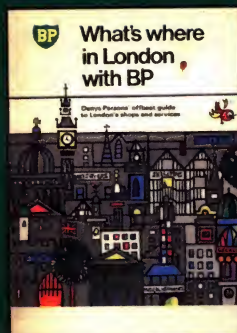
This book is all about flags, and it caught my eye as it had a picture of a large battleship all ready for a fight in it. Around the ship the artist had tried to draw other things like the sea and clouds. These aren't really very convincing, but the boat does at least look real.

The ship was included in the text because it had flags on it. It actually had flags *all over* it.

Having read this book from cover to cover, moving slowly left to right, as I described earlier, I can truly say that I can identify every single flag in the world. Not only the national flag but also the trade, shipping and coastal emblem of every country or state in the world. Oh yes... I almost forgot, there's also a good picture inside of an army about to go to war. They also had flags on and 'near' them too.

You'll find any of these books in new or second-hand bookshops, except *'Barney... My Husband'* - this you'll have to get from my friend Oliver Ross in Lyme Regis, Dorset, outside school hours.

Later! Culk Z



things in London. You can look up, for instance, where to buy Sludge Manure, from Morganic,

WHAT'S WHERE IN LONDON

by Denys Parsons

This book is more like a list than a book, but you can use it to find out where to buy sheets for your bed. It's a complete list (circa 1962) of shops and special



Star Book

BARNEY... MY HUSBAND by Jane Hamford

This is a good book. It's good for two reasons:

1. It's only an eight-page pamphlet and even better, takes just two to three hours to read.
2. It's FREE at the Lyme Regis Fossil Club House.

Barney's grandfather was a Cudgel fighter, which means he was a wandering wrestler in the early 1900s. He walked 20 miles to compete in a fight in a distant village and won. Then he simply walked back home again.

While Barney's grandfather was off fighting, his wife Joan made pretty food baskets in the village. The family moved to Charmouth (a nearby village) in 1916 and started a building business. Barney was born. Barney grew up and became fond of collecting fossils; his motto was "Always buy cold forged". He then went to Italy, took his cravat off as it was hot, and then returned to England.

He now has many nice fossils that he has collected with his cold forged chisel on show at the Lyme Regis Club House.

BARNEY...
my husband



by Jane Hamford



HERE'S A QUICK INTRODUCTION TO the opening characters of this month's Mr Cursor, Mildred and Beryl. Beryl is 63 and a bit dodderly, while Mildred is 67 and virtually senile. But where are they now? And what are they doing at the moment? I know, let's take a look through the 'arched' window...

Silly old bags...

Mildred and Beryl have wandered into Dixons in the mistaken belief that it's an M&S. They wander around, slightly confused, for several minutes, until an item catches Beryl's eye...

"Oooh, look Mildred, there's a Hank Marvin long player."

"What? Where?"

"There. Look... I'm pointing."

"Eh? That? How can that be a long player? It's much too small."

"No, no, silly. It's called a 'seedy'. They're new inventions. My grandson's got one. They're silver."

"Oh. Do you think they would work on my gramophone? Or would I have to buy a new needle?"

"I think you'll actually have to buy a new gramophone, I'm afraid."

"Oh dear."

"Yes, I know. I don't see why they have to keep on changing things. (Sigh.) Still, let's have a look anyway, shall we? Let me just get my glasses. Where are they now? (She finds them and puts them on.)"

Oh! Mildred! It's the Buddy Holly one!"

(Speechless rasping) "No!"

"Yes, yes. It is. It's the very same record we saw advertised on the tv on Tuesday afternoon during the Nanette Newman picture. Hank Marvin Plays Buddy Holly!"

"Well I never. Wait a

He's afraid of... cash registers (and Hank Marvin)

minute, let me get MY glasses..."

(About two minutes pass as Mildred fumbles about in her twin-wheeled shopping trolley basket thingummy. She eventually finds them, squints, and the world slowly comes back into focus...)

"You see? I told you. It's Hank Marvin Plays Buddy Holly!"

"Yes, you're right Beryl. It is him. I'd recognise those spectacles and that shiny red guitar anywhere..."

Rabbit rabbit rabbit...

And so on, for like about *nine* hours. The end result, though, is that *Hank Marvin Plays Buddy Holly* manages to sell two copies, and, by way of a sort of reverse marketing domino effect, two Sanyo £139 Home Entertainment Systems also exchange hands. Computer lights now blink knowingly at one another throughout the store and – not that hapless Mildred and Beryl are aware of it – send messages across the world. The purchases have been linked, and Hank Marvin, as far as the shop's cash registers are concerned, is good news for the Sanyo Corp. Sanyo's computers, receiving and linking this information, then have a chat with the computer at Hank's record company. An e-mail is thus sproinged, 28 seconds later, onto the monitor of the managing director...

"Dear record company boss, this is Sanyo," it says. "We are considering subsidising your *Hank Marvin Plays Buddy Holly* advertising campaign as he appears to be helping us unload our bottom of the range hi-fi equipment."

Unfortunately, Hank Marvin's record company manager is in hospital following a vodka and sleeping tablet overdose, which means he is oblivious to this e-mail for another four days.

Still, he manages to recover and intercept it just in time, replies, and gets three per cent of his Hank Marvin advertising spend negated as a result. Yawn.

Vital statistics

But bear in mind that all this happened thanks to ONE shop in ONE town in ONE county of the UK. Now for some maths. How many Dixons per town? Let's say point nine. How many towns in a county? Lots. How many villages are there, feeding

these towns? Again, heaps and heaps.

How many counties in the country? Fuck knows.

How many cities? Don't ask me.

How many Dixons per city? Loads.

How many Mildred and Beryls would you find per square mile?

Who knows?

But I do know one thing, and it's this: Hank Marvin has earned himself some more moolah somewhere along the line. Which to my way of thinking is immoral, but, bizarrely, I'm about to ask you to make him even richer than he already is. I'm about to suggest that you (ahem) actually *buy* a Hank Marvin CD yourself...

Hold your horses...

Before you close the mag in disgust, let me explain, please. Yes, Hank Marvin is the most pathetically useless guitarist on the planet. Granted – he's appalling, words just can't describe... But I was at a chum's place recently and we had the most hilarious evening ever. It was a 'play like Hank Marvin competition', using a red Squire Stratocaster (with whammy bar, naturally). Three of those present had never played guitar before, but it didn't matter: you don't need to know how to play guitar in order to mimic Hank, you just need to be able to hold down a string and shake the whammy bar like a retarded sloth.

I came second, incidentally.

And the next evening we followed up by listening to a *real* Hank Marvin solo album, and this was even better. Laugh? We shat ourselves. And you will too, trust me, the only prerequisite being that you've got to be a bit bollocksed.

A plea from the heart

Oh, and one final thing, which is a request. Being virtually computer illiterate, I don't know how to set up a site on the Net, but I'd dearly love to see one in which people could upload their 'Here's Me Playing A Bit Of Such And Such A Song Like Hank Marvin' wav files. It'd be a global competition, with a constantly updated Top Ten. You know the kind of thing I mean?

Oh, and by the way, if anyone *can* do the technical business, I've got a wav file of me playing eight bars of *Makes Me Wanna Die* by Tricky (by Hank Marvin), and I'm desperate to share it. It's shit!!! Z



(Above) Get a 'seedy' on that grannyphone and Hank that plank!

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